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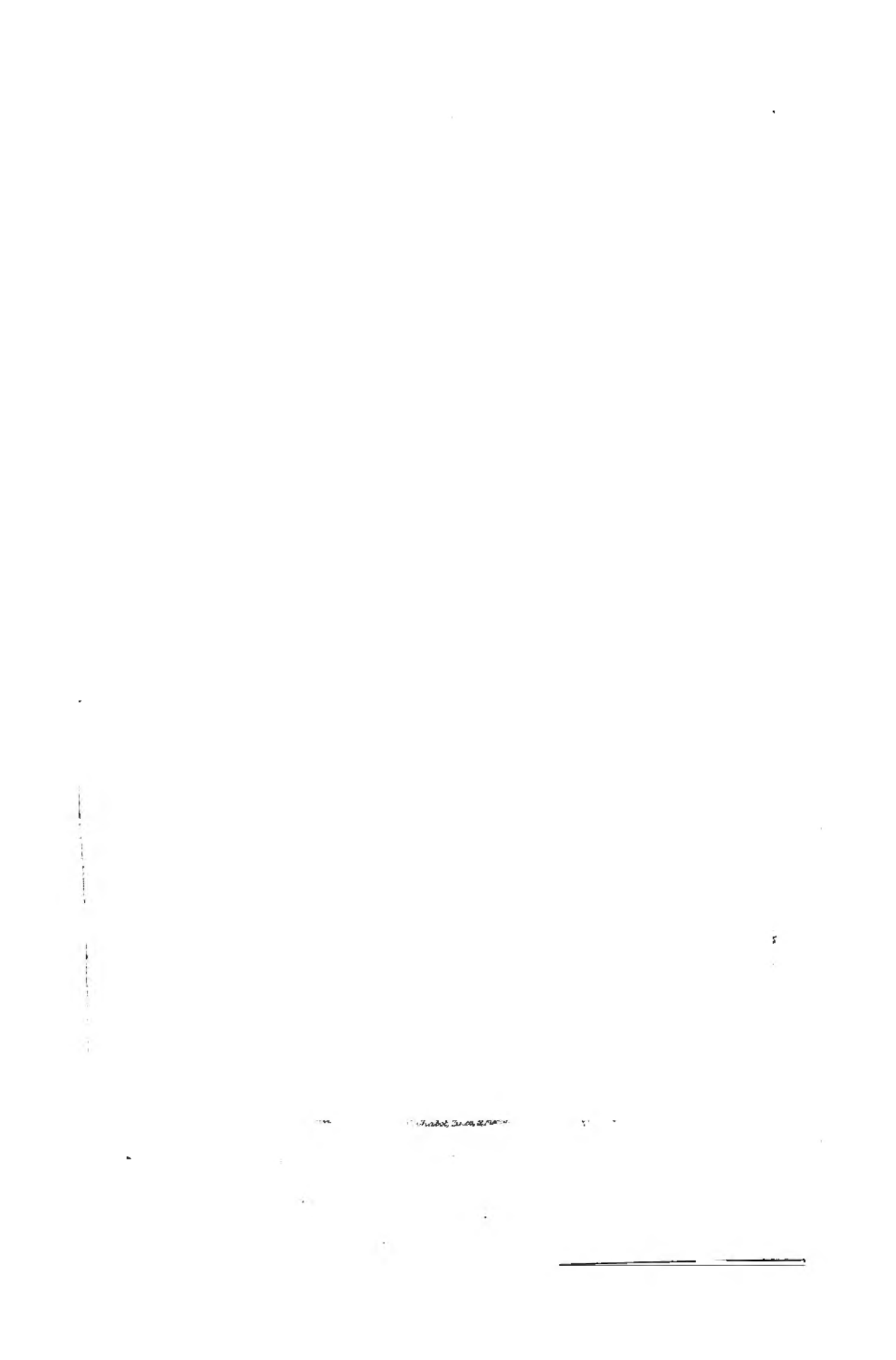
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39.

1210.

THE RHINE.

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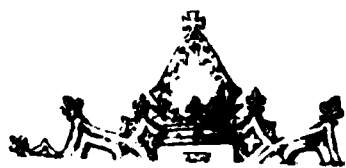
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THE
RHINE,
LEGENDS, TRADITIONS, HISTORY,
FROM
COLOGNE TO MAINZ.

BY
JOSEPH SNOWE, Esq.



IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
F. C. WESTLEY, CHILD'S PLACE, TEMPLE BAR.
J. MADDEN & CO. 8 LEADENHALL STREET.

M.DCCC.XXXIX.

1210.

P R E F A C E.

THE want of a work which should include all the “legends, traditions, and history” of that most romantic and remarkable portion of the RHINE lying between COLOGNE and MAINZ, has been long felt by the European public. It is quite true that much has been written on these subjects, in various languages, and that a great deal has been done towards elucidating them in several forms: so far the subject is not a new one. But still it is no less true, that the wild and wondrous legends which appertain to each particular castle on that immortal river — the extraordinary traditions which attach themselves to almost every spot on its shores — the spirit-stirring histories connected with its cities, and towns, and hamlets, through the long period when it was, not alone the sole highway of central Europe, but the centre of European civilization, have never as yet been gathered together, nor given in any thing like an entire form and complete shape to the world. The present attempt is made,

to supply, as far as possible, that desideratum in general literature.

To those who have traversed the shores of this noble stream, and to those who intend to travel thither, it is believed that than this work there can be no more acceptable offering. It is presumed that it will revive in the minds of the one the dormant beauties of those glorious scenes over which they have heretofore wandered, and fix them more firmly in remembrance, by connecting them with the facts of history or the fictions of romance ; while to the other, it is trusted that it will serve as a stimulant to quicken their apprehension of coming pleasure, by exciting their reason, their memory, and their imagination. Thus, the recollection of the past, and the anticipation of the future, will, it is fondly hoped, be blended by its means into one bright and harmonious whole.

The various subjects, whether “ legend, tradition, or history,” treated of in the succeeding pages, have been derived from so many sources, oral as well as written, that merely to quote them would be to swell this preface beyond all reasonable limits ; and as it could serve no useful purposes, either to the scholar who, from the nature of his acquirements, must know the well-springs whence they have been drawn, without being under obligation

to any one for the knowledge, or to the mere reader, who has no occasion for such information, it has been deemed right to make no more than a mere passing allusion to them. Hither and thither in the body of the book, however, will be found references to the historical authorities from which it is in part compiled, as well as to the originals on which many of the legends and traditions to be met with in it are founded; which, it is believed, will be sufficient for all useful purposes of that description.

The author has nothing to add, save that he has endeavoured to make his work as worthy of the public favour as possible; and that it will not be wholly his fault if it does not succeed.

London, June 20th, 1839.

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INTRODUCTION.

AMONG the highest peaks of the hoary Rhetian Alps is the snowy summit of the St. Gothard. Around him rise many other peaks of fearful altitude: the Furcæ, the Vogelberg, the Erispalt, and the Splügen; but none is so high as he. From within this mighty mass of original mountains, amidst eternal glaciers and endless forests of dark pines, springs a stream—a wild, small, hill torrent,—like a hundred others from the same source,—which seems no more than any of its fellows. It appears to take its rise but to perish after it has run, like them, a brief and troubled career. But, if the wanderer follows its waters, he will find that, like a native avalanche, it gathers strength, and size, and greatness, as it goes; until, uniting with another branch from the same source at Dissentis, in the Grisons, and with a third at Razuns, in the same canton, it marches majestically plainwards, like a mountain giant; rushing through the lake of Constance; bounding with a fearful leap over the ledges of rock which intersect its path at Schaffhausen; flowing by the northern bounds of Switzerland and washing the walls of Basel; finally, it courses with untroubled career from thence to the distant northern ocean, on the coast of Holland.—That stream is the Rhine, and this

is its course: the first river of Europe, and the pride and glory of Germany.

A short sketch of the history of this noble stream is compatible with the plan of this work.* According to the accounts of Cæsar and of Tacitus, the first writers extant in whose pages any thing relating to the Rhine is mentioned, the Germans who dwelt on its shores were a strong, well-formed race, with blue eyes and fair hair, and of a bold aspect. From their earliest youth they were trained to arms; and, therefore, they were a war-like people. Religious feeling, love of freedom, and chastity of manners, were their virtues; drunkenness, debauchery, and a love for fighting, were their vices.

In these early days of history, the Germans were divided into two great peoples—the Swabians, or Suevi; and the Harzers, or Herusci. From the former, a wandering race, the inhabitants of the Rhine shores were principally descended. Three tribes, withdrawing from the great body, or Swabian union, established themselves under one leader, on that part of the river which extends from the Vosges mountains to the Ell or Ill rivulet. They were known in the time of the Romans as the Tribocii; but, in later times, they were called, after the name of the country in which they dwelt, the Alsatians. A second division of the same people detached itself from the main body about the same period, and occupied the

* Much of the matter of this sketch is derived from Vogt's celebrated work, "Rheinische Geschichte und Sagen;" Herrmann's "Allgemeine Geschichte;" Cæsar, Tacitus, Barre "Allgemeine Geschichte von Deutschland;" Bodman's "Rheingauische Alterthümer," and other works of the same character, were also used.

land lying between the Ill, which then bounded Alsatia, and Spires; they were named the Nemetes. And a third division extended itself in the same manner from the bounds of the latter, the little town of Spires, to the Nahe near Bingen. These bore the name of Vangiones, and their chief place was Worms. Below the Neckar and the Maine dwelt, on the right bank of the Rhine, the Ubii; on the left, the Treviri. From thence to the sea was occupied with various tribes and races—the Mattiaci, the Langobadi, the Sigambri, the Belgæ, the Batavi, and the Frisi.

The difficulties which the Roman power had to overcome, before these brave people were subjugated to its sovereignty, are too well known to all readers to be dilated on here. Suffice it to say, that never did it meet with greater resistance any where. The Germans were, in point of fact, never altogether subdued. They stood, in the time of her greatness, more in the character of allies towards Rome, than in that of subjects; and, when luxury had enervated the strength of the empire, and ages had worn out its vigour, they assumed the port of masters more than the demeanour of friends. To prove the formidable character of these freedom-loving tribes, it will suffice to say, that of the twenty-five legions which composed the military force of Rome, in the reign of Augustus, eight were encamped on the Rhine alone; making in all an army of nearly one hundred thousand men.*

* They were the 1st (Julian), the 5th (Macedonian), 19th (Macedonian), 20th (Valeria Victrix), on the Upper Rhine; and the 2d (Augusta), 13th (Gemina Pia Fidelia), 14th (Gemina Martia Victrix), and the 16th, on the Lower Rhine.

The Rhine, while under the dominion of the Romans, experienced many changes in the form of its internal government, as the empire itself changed its forms and its rulers from period to period; but the Germans were never cordially united with the conquerors of the world. Various quarrels arose between them at different times, which it required all the strength of Rome, and all the skill of its ablest generals, to suppress: but, to relate the several efforts of the one to throw off the yoke of vassalage, and of the other to regulate their servitude, would be only to follow the history of the empire through its decline to its fall. The liberation of Germany was effected by the incursion of the barbarians of the north under Attila. They then availed themselves of the favourable opportunity, when the might of their masters was no more, and became once more free.

After the incursion of this fierce people, we find two races dwelling on the shores of the Rhine—the Franks and the Alemanni. The former occupied the lower portion of the river, even to its mouth; the latter, that which is known as the Upper Rhine, to the bounds of Helvetia. Of these the Franks occupy the largest space in history, as they ultimately became rulers of the entire.

Lodwig was the founder of the Frankish monarchy about the beginning of the fifth century; but the race of kings which succeeded him took their name from Merovæus, and were called after him the Merovignian dynasty (A.D. 437). After the manner of the Germans, the lands on the Rhine were apportioned into Duchies and Gaues; and the whole was comprehended under one general title—namely, Austrasia, or the eastern kingdom.

The history of the Merovignian monarchs, from the death of Merovæus, is one tissue of weakness and cruelty, mixed up with many others of the vices which disgrace human nature most. Feuds, assassinations, and drunken debaucheries, were usual among the nobles; while the common people were sunk in the lowest state of ignorance. The kings were surrounded by women and priests; and were entirely under the control of their mayors of the palace. The last sovereign of this dynasty, Childerick the Third, was deprived of his dignity by Pipin the Little — power he never had any — and sent to a monastery in St. Omer, where he ended his days (A.D. 752). Pipin succeeded him; and from his celebrated son, Charlemagne, the race of kings which followed are known by the name of the Carlovignian dynasty.

The greatest monarch, perhaps, that the world ever saw, was Charlemagne. He extended the empire of the Franks over almost all Europe; he established his rule among the Saxons and other barbarous people of the north; his friendship was courted by the Byzantine emperors; and even the successor of Mahomet, the celebrated Haroun Alraschid, is said to have sought his alliance, and valued his esteem. He is the hero of a history which looks like romance, so wondrous were his deeds, in comparison with the time and circumstances under which they were effected; and the lapse of more than ten centuries has not succeeded in effacing his memory from the minds of the people whose ancestors he once governed, for he still flourishes the first in fable, the foremost in legend, and tradition, and song. Occasion will be taken to speak more at length of the most remarkable

portions of his personal history in another part of these pages.

The fabric of his government was, however, but ill sustained by his successors; and under the reign of his immediate follower, Ludwig the Pious, it sustained a shock from which it never recovered. Dissensions and discord between the several branches of the royal family, and between the kingly power and the people—or rather the great barons of the kingdom, for in those days the people were only serfs—were of frequent occurrence. These tended to sap the strength of the former, while they had any effect but an advantageous one for the empire. At length the dynasty of Charlemagne was extinguished, in the beginning of the tenth century, by the death of Ludwig the Child, A.D. 911.

The Franconian dynasty, founded by Conrad the First, followed. It lasted, with various fortune, for one hundred and five years; and became extinct in the person of Henry the Second, A.D. 1024.

To this succeeded the Salique dynasty, by the free election of Conrad the Second. This race of sovereigns held the reins of empire only about a century. It ended with the parricide, Henry the Fifth, A.D. 1125.

The Saxon dynasty came after, and numbered among its princes some of the greatest which governed Germany since the time of Charlemagne. Of these, Frederic the First (Barbarossa), was the most famous. This dynasty died in the person of Conrad the Fourth, A.D. 1268; after having gloriously filled the throne of the holy Roman empire for nearly a century and a half.

Rudolf von Hapsburg, a Swiss knight, the founder of

the present Austrian family, next succeeded to the sovereignty of Germany ; and, by the wisdom and valour so conspicuous in every action of his long and fortunate life, perpetuated his name and lineage in a long line of emperors,—at one time the most important, and still not the least powerful, of the great monarchs of Europe. It should, however, be observed, that his successors in the government of the German empire were not members of his own immediate race ; but that many of them were of different families, altogether disconnected with him. The Austrian house again attained to the empire only in the fifteenth century, in the person of Albrecht the Third ; but they have since held it, under various modifications, to this day.

In the meanwhile, during all or the greater part of these changes, the Rhine was generally the seat and centre of the imperial power ; and thus the history of the one is necessarily that of the other. Its shores were, however, divided into palatinates, or principalities, at a very early period after the failure of the Carlovignian dynasty, each of which was governed by its own sovereign, independent, in every thing except the name, of the Emperor of Germany. A necessity will arise to give details of the history of many of these princes, as this work proceeds ; and, therefore, it is deemed sufficient to state here, in conclusion of this imperfect sketch, that, from the era of Charlemagne to the time of Bonaparte, the Rhine has been the focus of most of the military, political, social, and religious revolutions, evolutions, and movements, which have affected not alone the destinies of Europe, but probably those of the entire world.

To prove this, it need only be added, that the first mercantile confederation, the Hanse League, took its rise on its banks ; that the art of printing was invented in one of its cities ; and that the Reformation had birth, and was cradled to maturity, beside its bounding waters. Need any thing more be added ?

CHURCH OF THE APOSTLES, COLOGNE.
Drawn on Zinc by A. Buder.

THE TOWN HALL AT COLOGNE.
Printed by C. Chabot 7 Thavies Inn.

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THE RHINE.

COLOGNE.

THE original inhabitants of Cologne were, properly speaking, the Ubii, who, in the time of Augustus Cæsar, were driven across the Rhine by the Hessians. To recompense their fidelity to Rome, the emperor granted them a portion of the land of the Menapians,—the present duchy of Julich ; and, to keep them in check, a Roman colony was founded on the site of the present city of Cologne. It was built in the year of our Lord 50 ; and, at the desire of Julia Agrippina, wife of Claudius, mother of Nero, and daughter of Drusus Germanicus, who was born in the camp or capital of the Ubii (*Oppidum Ubiorum*), it was called after her. Hence its name, Cologne, from Colonia Agrippina ; though it was more commonly known among the Ubii by the appellation of Agrippina. From this origin the city has always claimed its freedom, and the citizens asserted their right to be free ; a claim which was allowed, and a right which was recognised in every subsequent mutation of the German Empire, until the period of the first French revolution.

The history of Cologne, under the Roman domination, is but a history of that powerful empire. Vitellius was proclaimed emperor in this city ; and Trajan held the high office of imperial legate within its walls when he was nominated by Nerva to succeed him. Many others of the Roman emperors resided here ; and here it also was—on the spot where the Church of St. Severins now stands—that Sylvanus was assassinated, after a reign of twenty-eight days.

The Franks besieged and sacked Cologne in the time of Constantius—the beginning of the fourth century ;—holding

it for some time after as a portion of their possessions. It was, however, recovered from them by the Romans under Julian the Apostate, and annexed once more to the empire. It fell again into the hands of the Franks, A.D. 460-2; and from thenceforward continued under their sovereignty. Clovis was proclaimed king of the Franks in Cologne. In the year 949, Otto the Great, emperor of Germany, declared it an imperial free city; and granted to it all the immunities and privileges attached to that condition. The bishopric and temporal principality in connexion with it he subsequently bestowed on his brother, Bruno, who is celebrated in local history, not alone as the first elector of Cologne, but also as the destroyer of the Roman bridge over the Rhine from that city to Deutz.

In the year 1064, great disquiet ensued between the citizens and their sovereign, Bishop Hanno; of which, as they will be treated more at large a little onward, mention is barely made here.

Henry the Fifth besieged Cologne at the time his father, Henry the Fourth, escaped from Klopp—Cologne being one of those cities which stood by the old emperor in his extremity; but he was obliged to decamp from its walls without being able to make any impression on them.

In the year 1201, Cologne became a member of the celebrated Hanseatic League; and in a few years afterwards, from its wealth, and power, and population, and extent of commerce with all parts of the then known world, it assumed the chief place in that important mercantile union.

At this auspicious era it was that, from the number, and riches, and variety, and greatness of the religious foundations within its walls, Cologne received the appellations of the “Holy City,” and the “Rome of the North.”

The famous battle of Hermann Gryn, the brave Burgomaster of Cologne, with the Archbishop's Lion—of which a more detailed account will be given in the sequel—took place in the year 1262. The bitter feuds between the archbishop and the burghers, which preceded and followed, were only appeased by the pacific intervention of the celebrated Albertus Magnus, previously bishop of Ratisbon, then a friar minor resident in the city. But the truce which ensued was only temporary;

indeed it scarcely lasted the brief remainder of his life-time. While the exciting cause of popular discord exists, occasion to exhibit it will seldom be wanting: we, therefore, find that from this period, until the commencement of the fifteenth century, Cologne was never a consecutive year quiet; but that dissensions were perpetually breaking forth — now between the archbishop and the burghers, now between the burghers and the patricians, and so on for more than two centuries.

In the early part of the fourteenth century Cologne was the chief city and the centre of the great Hanse-Towns Confederacy. In the Rath-haus was held the supreme court of that formidable commercial league. The cotton and silk-manufactures were then the principal trade of the city; and at that period there were eighty thousand looms employed on them alone at work within its walls. Cologne, at this time, was also the centre of German civilisation; and schools of art in painting, sculpture, and design, were established there, which had the most beneficial influence on the genius of the Flemish masters, who followed. The cathedral was a result of this high degree of wealth and refinement.

In the year 1333, Cologne was honoured by a visit from Petrarch, who thus speaks of it:—"How glorious is this city! What a wonder to find such a spot in a barbarous land! What dignity in the men! what grace and tenderness in the women!"* And again, speaking of the literary taste of the inhabitants, and the poetical genius which displayed itself among them, he observes:—"But before all things else will it surprise thee, as it did me, to find Pierean spirits under such a cloudy heaven. Know, then, that though here be no Maros, yet are there very many Nasos."†

In the year 1374, the Rhine increased to such a height that its waters overtopped the battlements of Cologne, and filled all the streets and houses of the city; and fourteen years subsequently (A.D. 1388) it suddenly shrunk so much within its channel, that horsemen forded it freely, and no vessel or boat could float on its waters.

* "*Epistolæ Familiares*;" addressed to his friend and patron, John, Cardinal Colonna.

† *Idem*. Alluding to Virgil and Ovid.

A.D. 1471, William Caxton commenced the trade of a printer in this city, and established the first press that was ever worked within its walls. One of his earliest productions—two years afterwards reprinted in London, to which city he subsequently removed—was given to the world in Cologne.

Cologne grew daily in wealth and greatness during this era; but the seeds of destruction had been long sown in its social constitution. The internal troubles between the archbishops and the burghers continued with unabated fierceness; the alienation of the mass of the population from those claiming to be patricians, or the nobility, increased; the magistracy succumbed before the power and influence of the guilds or trades of the city; and licentiousness and disorder were the natural and necessary results of this clashing of interests and opposition of power.

These circumstances contributed mainly to the decline of the city; but there were others, in the two succeeding centuries, which would have equally affected it in the same manner, had they never existed. Among the many, three may be enumerated as the most fatal to its prosperity; and they take their rise as much from bad civil government as from the influence of a foul superstition. The first was the persecution and banishment of all the Jews within its walls. Eighty thousand are said to have been expelled at one moment—on Bartholomew's day, 1425—by an order of the senate and council, excited and procured by the influence of the clergy. The second was the expulsion of the weavers—then a most formidable body of men—for an act of insurrection which took place shortly after. On this occasion no less than one thousand seven hundred looms were publicly burned in the presence, and by the order, of the magistracy. These artisans found refuge in various towns without the jurisdiction of Cologne, principally in the territory of the prince-bishop of Liege; and, carrying with them almost all the knowledge of their occupation, they carried away, also, the principal source of wealth of the city. The last and worst was the persecution and banishment of the Protestants, shortly before the commencement of the Thirty Years' War, A. D. 1618. Fourteen hundred of the first houses in the city were vacated on that occasion; trade and commerce came to a

stand-still; and local industry received a blow by this impolitic and unjust proceeding from which it has never since recovered, and perhaps never will recover.

Cologne submitted without a struggle to the all-subduing arms of the French in the first revolution, October 6, 1794; and twenty years subsequently, A.D. 1814, it was entered by the Russians. Since then it has remained a part of the kingdom of Prussia; and is at present the chief city of the Rhenane provinces appertaining to that powerful nation.

In the year 1646, according to Merian,* Cologne was the greatest city in Germany. He then gives the following account of its extent, and the principal buildings it contained at that period.—“ It has no suburb; and it is like a bow, or semicircle, along the shore of the Rhine. In the centre of this semicircle there was once a bridge to the opposite shore, built by the Roman emperor Constantine, A.D. 307; but it was destroyed by the command of the German emperor, Otho the Great, A.D. 1180. The city hath since then been much enlarged, and it is now surrounded by a high strong wall, wherein, at intervals, are as many as eighty-two or eighty-three towers; the whole defended by a deep double ditch. Thirty-four gates give entrance to the interior of the city, which is filled with stately buildings, vineyards, orchards, and pleasant walks for recreation. The best houses are in the vicinity of the Rathhaus and the Heumarckt. The streets are long and spacious, paved with large stones, and perforated with sewers. In Cologne there be eleven colleges of canons (*Colleges Canonicorum*), twenty-seven monasteries, thirty-two nunneries, together with a great many convents of Beguines; and several houses for religious old ladies not professed: nineteen parish churches, ten churches attached to religious houses, thirty chapels; two great hospitals, or, more properly speaking, hostelries for destitute travellers, two hospitals for the cure of the sick poor, and eight poor-houses for the permanent abode of those who possess no property of their own, and no means of supporting themselves. There are also a

* “Topog. Archd. Moguntiensis, Trevirensis, Coloniensis, fol.” An excellent work, to which reference will be frequently made in these pages.

foundling house and a large lunatic asylum. It hath as many steeples as there be days in the year ; and twenty-five thousand of its inhabitants are of the ecclesiastical condition."

At the present time Cologne has twenty-four gates ; and the population is said to amount to fifty thousand souls. A very large proportion of its ecclesiastical foundations were secularised in the first French revolution, and have so continued ever since.

Cologne contains many works of architecture and art, ancient and modern, that is to say, of the middle ages downwards ; the principal are ecclesiastical structures. Of these, mention shall be made first—the civil edifices to follow—and, first of the first, of that stupendous fragment which still serves as its cathedral.

" Amongst all the churches of Cologne," continues Merian, " nay, beyond all the churches of Europe, is the cathedral the most excellent. It is dedicated to the prince of the apostles, St. Peter ; and was designed by Engelbert the Holy, A.D. 1220, and begun to be erected, in the year of grace 1248, by Hanno.* Though still unfinished, it is, and hath ever been, accounted the wonder of the Christian world. From the time of its erection, it was made a custom of the state that every new archbishop should add a portion of the original design to that which had already been erected before him ; to the end that, in the course of years, the whole edifice might be completed : and that good custom was long complied with. But in the end it fell into disuse, owing to the local troubles which first broke out between the archbishops and the citizens, and then to the troubles which affected Germany in general up to the period of the Reformation. Thus, this noble monument of religion and of art still remains in an unfinished condition. Here be the bodies of the three kings of the East, brought from Milan by the Emperor Frederic the First, and presented to the Archbishop Reinhold ; also are here many monuments and sculptured tombs, in marble and in ala-

* Vogt, " Rheinische Geschichte und Sagen," says by Konrad von Hochstetten ; and Vogt is the best authority on Rhenish history extant.

baster, of by-gone princes, electors, and archbishops. It is said that the bones of Judas Maccabeus, and his brothers, rest here also; and that they are to be found enclosed in the shrine of their own chapel."

To Engelbert, the first archbishop of that name who filled the see of Cologne, Count of Berg in his own right, posterity owes the projection of this noble edifice, as has been already stated, A.D. 1218-20. At this period he possessed more power than any other prince in the country, spiritual or temporal; for he was not alone selected by the pope as his vicar-general in Germany, but he was also invested with the sole regency of the empire, in the absence of Frederick the Second at the fourth crusade. To him was owing not only the increase of the principality of Cologne, by the addition of the territories of the Countess Matilda of Wied, whom he had persuaded to demise them to the Church; but also its freedom from the control of the petty barons and knights, who, until his time, exercised their predatory prowess upon all persons within their power. He cleared the land of robbers; he encouraged agriculture, and conferred many privileges on the peasants with that intent; he promoted industry of all kinds; he beautified the city itself with many public buildings; he patronised the fine arts, and he rewarded excellence in its various branches. The proudest fruits of this patronage are to be found in the original plan of the cathedral, which he caused to be made; a monument of his reign, which he intended should surpass in greatness those of all the other sovereigns of Europe.

The original dimensions of this splendid structure were, according to Vogt,* as follows: "It was designed to form a Latin cross, the length of which, from east to west, should be 400 feet, and the width 200 feet. Over the intersection of the arms of this cross, it was contemplated to erect a cupola of the largest possible size. At the western extremity there were to have been two enormous towers, each of five stories high; the several stories to be supported upon curious pillars; both to be surmounted with pointed spires of finely carved fret-work. The lower story of each tower was destined to form an ante-hall, or

* "Rheinische Geschichte und Sagen." Band. 3.

porch, to the two main entrances of the church. At the lateral extremities of the cross, in the northern and southern sides of the building, there were to be also two grand entrances. Four hundred and sixty ponderous pillars, ranged in double rows, from east to west, were destined to support the immense roof; and an equal number of pilasters, to correspond with them, were to be inserted in the side-walls of this transcendant edifice. Each pillar was to be of a different design from its fellow; and no one of the pilasters was to be the same form as the other." Such was the original design of this magnificent fragment. How far it has been completed, the reader may see from the following description of its present state by Schreiber.*

"The two towers, which were intended to be 500 feet high, remain unfinished; the northern one is not more than twenty-one feet above the ground, and the other is little more than half the intended height. * * * *

"Only the choir of the church, and the chapels surrounding it, have been finished. The columns in the nave of the church terminate at a ceiling composed of simple planks, covered with slates."

It is not to be supposed that, in a land where legendary lore may be almost said to be coeval with the soil, this stupendous work of art should remain untouched by the tongue of fable. Tradition has been busy with it in various forms: with the plan—with the execution of the part that is finished; nay, even with the very accessories. The minutiae have been touched by its impress as well as the whole. Those which are the most striking are subjoined.

The first relates to the plan; and it purports to embrace an explanation of a singular fact—the ignorance of the world to this hour of the name of the architect to whom it is due. It runs thus in the original.†

* "The Traveller's Guide to the Rhine." Leigh. Strand. A good guide-book.

† "Rheinland's Sagen, Geschichten, und Legenden, Herausgeben, von Alfred Reumont." Köln und Aachen, 1837. A very agreeable and instructive volume on Rhenish history and tradition.

THE CATHEDRAL OF COLOGNE.

THE PLAN.

SORROW seizes the heart of every spectator who looks on that unfinished, but still glorious structure, the Cathedral of Cologne. It is only a fragment; but it is such a fragment as the strength and the intellect of those Titanic beings of old — the offspring of “the sons of God with the daughters of men” — might have reared for their primeval worship; and prided themselves, too, on its erection. There are many stories told of its origin and progress, for it was upwards of two hundred and fifty years in becoming even what it is; and tradition has been busy with its history in almost as many ways as the fertile imagination of man — and that man German too — could fancy; but the fact of the architect's name who planned it being altogether unknown, and even the very circumstance of its remaining unfinished through such a long series of superstitious ages, are as singular and as strange as any thing said of it by fiction. Fiction, however, has availed itself of both these facts; and the following legends are, to this day, the popular faith on the subject.

When Engelbert the Holy, prince-bishop of Cologne, more than once named in these volumes, ascended the episcopal throne of that powerful city, he projected an ecclesiastical edifice, which, by putting to shame the excellences of every other church in Christendom, by surpassing them in extent, by out-vying them in magnificence, by towering above them in grandeur and in greatness, should eclipse the fame of all former founders, and render his memory immortal in the annals of the world. To this end he summoned the most celebrated architect in Cologne — then the centre of German science and civilisation; and, opening to him his views, commanded him to prepare a plan and estimate of the work.

One evening, shortly after this interview, the architect wandered on the shore of the Rhine, deeply musing on the various suggestions which presented themselves to his imagination in respect of the contemplated structure, and struggling in his mind to reduce the crude ideal mass to shape and form. As he strayed thoughtfully along, he came at length to that spot on the bank of the river, so well known as the Frankenpforte, or Frank's Gate—still distinguished by a couple of mutilated statues of the time of that formidable people, placed high up in the masonry of the wall—and then sate him down, as much to collect his chaotic conceptions as to take rest from the fatigue of his long walk. While he sat thus, his face towards the broad bright current of the river, his back on the busy town, the faint hum of which was scarcely heard by him in his mental abstraction, he busied himself in tracing on the smooth sand at his feet, with the point of his travelling staff, each new idea for the meditated structure, as it arose in his mind, and ultimately succeeded in combining them all into one great whole, which, in truth, presented a very proud and noble appearance. At the moment that he was putting the finishing stroke to this rude sketch, the setting sun tipped with his declining rays the pinnacles of its tower, and produced an effect at once wonderful and splendid.

“I have it,” he cried in an ecstasy of joy, such as Archimedes of old is said to have felt at the discovery of the law of specific gravity; “I have it—I have it!” He proceeded at once to complete the plan he had traced; and then folding his arms, to compress, as it would almost seem, the emotions of his heart, he exclaimed aloud,—

“A glorious conception—a temple to the Lord's honour and my eternal fame; whose pinnacles, from their altitude, shall be still ruddy with the light of yon splendid luminary long after flood and field, temple, and tower, and town, shall be buried in darkness. There it is!” he spoke in rapture and delight. “It now lies before me!”

“Indeed—does it?” said, on a sudden, a sneering voice in his ear. “Is that it?—Good! Why, that's the cathedral of Strasburg. Ha! ha! ha!”

The architect started back with amaze, and it may be with

some indignation, at this unwonted speech. He had believed himself alone; nay, he would have sworn that no one could approach within ear-shot of him without his cognizance; but, behold, there stood at his elbow an old, withered-looking wight, with a most malicious expression of countenance, laughing, as it seemed to his mind, in a manner to make his sides well-nigh sore. A second glance shewed the offended artist that the intruder had ceased in his unwelcome cacophony, and was slowly withdrawing from the scene. The sneering observation of the malicious senior was not, however, altogether lost upon its object; the offended architect had sufficient good sense to perceive its justice. He saw at once that what he had believed to be a pure invention of his own was but the recollection of the works of others; and that, when he had imagined himself inspired by genius, he was only acting under the influence of memory. There was, however, now no help for it; so he effaced his plan in all haste, and proceeded to the delineation of another.

“I shall, at least in this,”—he spake to himself, as he drew the outlines of a fair and majestic building, of a different description from the former, on the yielding sand;—“I shall, in this at least, imitate no structure that I know of.”

A massive erection, surmounted by a beautiful dome, flanked by one immense tower of the most delicate Gothic workmanship, and protected in advance by two others of smaller dimensions but of equal delicacy and beauty, was distinctly visible on the level surface at his feet, as far as a clear outline sketch on such a material could make it.

“There!” he concluded, as he touched off the last lines of the production: “There! it is now done. I know of nothing like it.”

“Save the cathedral of Mainz—ha! ha! ha!” interposed the same harsh sneering voice which had before so excited and bewildered him.

Again he looked up, and again he started back with astonishment; for there, at his elbow, once more was the same malicious-looking old man, laughing more heartily than before at his confusion. His first impulse was to repay insult with insult; but a moment’s reflection shewed him how unequally the intruder was matched with him, and how little credit he would

derive even from a victory : for the tormenting old fellow looked long past the period allotted to the natural life of man by the prophet ; and decrepitude, arising from accident, or inherited with existence itself, seemed apparently superadded to the natural infirmities of extreme age.

“ It is not worth my while,” thought the architect, “ to try conclusions with such a sorry wretch as he. I’ll e’en let him go as he came.”

He turned on his heel, as he thought thus, and resumed his seat. When he looked up, the old fellow was nowhere to be seen.

“ Yet, he was right,” soliloquised he aloud. “ It was but a freak of memory after all ; and I fancied to create when I was only a copyist. It certainly is the cathedral of Mainz. However, I shall not despair. I’ll try once again : memory can now scarcely cheat me any more.”

Once more did he efface his work, and once more did he commence it anew. As he went on, his satisfaction increased ; so much so, that, when he had completed the rapid sketch, he sprang on his feet, and exclaimed :

“ ’Tis done ! None can gainsay it now : I have it.”

“ The cathedral of Amiens—ha ! ha ! ha ! ha !” echoed the well-known sneering accents of his tormentor, who again stood at his elbow, for a moment, grinning with most malicious delight at his discomfiture and dismay ; and then, as suddenly, became invisible to his sight.

“ The old villain !” exclaimed the baffled artist ; “ he delights to destroy my labours : yet still he is not wrong. How could I be such a dolt as again to draw on my recollection, and mistake it for a work of originality ? Once more, and I’ll end the matter ; or darkness will end it for me. I’ll try another, at all events, and then have done with it for the night.”

Once more he made a plain surface of sand under his feet ; and began afresh with his drawings. That which he finished on this occasion, just as the last lingering ray of twilight left the sky, was a mighty and a massive structure in appearance, with two immense octagonal towers, tapering upwards at each extremity, and a magnificent hexagonal dome over the entrance porch. Circular windows, cinque-foil lights, lanceolated aper-

tures—foliage of the most delicate workmanship—a mixture, in brief, of the early Gothic and the later Byzantine, with a remnant of the severe majesty of the Roman style, greeted his enraptured gaze. In a fit of enthusiasm, undepressed by his recent reverses—in the excitement of a heart made glad by a consciousness of success, he exclaimed, like a man in a delirium,—

“Behold —”

“The cathedral of Worms—ha! ha! ha! ha!” sneered once more the malicious graybeard, who again, most unaccountably to him, stood by his side, laughing so loud and so long as almost, in his mind, to awake the sleeping echoes of the seven mountains. Human nature could bear it no longer; and our artist felt the scorn of his tormentor aggravated, because he perceived that he was again right. Memory had played him many tricks that day; but this last was the “most unkind” of all.

“By the body of God, neighbour!” said he, approaching the mocking old man in a menacing manner;—“but ye laugh as though the fiend was in ye! Are you as well able to design a plan yourself as you are to criticise those of others?”

“Try me—ha! ha! ha!” shrieked the shrivelled graybeard; and he made the shores of the silent river ring as he laughed.

“Here, then,” said the irritated architect, handing him his staff; “take this, and, in the devil’s name, proceed.”

The old man took the staff, and, with the point, began to trace fragments of outline in the sand. They were only fragments—mere lines; but they were, notwithstanding, so perfectly novel and beautiful, that, like them, none was ever before beheld by his victim.

“Truly,” exclaimed the architect, as the plan proceeded, “you are, in sooth, a master of our art. That I can at once perceive. But I know you not. Are you of Cologne?”

“No,” replied the old man, dryly; stopping short in his work at the same moment.

“But, proceed,” resumed the former. “Why cease till you have finished it?”

“That is a good ’un too—ha! ha! ha!” again laughed his tormentor. “That’s not bad neither! You wish to have my plan to yourself; to rob me of all the honour and glory of the

design. No, no! you don't catch me napping that way, I warrant ye!—ha! ha! ha!”

The architect was silent for some moments, as if plunged in profound meditation; but he suddenly recovered, and, coming close to the old man's ear, whispered, in a voice hoarse with contending passions, and as hollow as that of an unblessed spirit,—

“Hear me—I'll give thee ten gold pieces for thy plan: finish it. We are alone; and then may nobody be the wiser of the bargain.”

They were alone; the night had fallen thick around them, and the hum of the populous city waxed faint and fainter on the ear, like an infant's breathing in a dying sleep.

“Ten gold pieces!” said his hoary tormentor. “Ten gold pieces to me! ha! ha! ha! Look at this, my friend.”

He laughed louder even than before, as he drew from beneath his shabby gaberdine a long, heavy, leathern purse, filled to the very brim, and threw it violently on the ground. The chink of its contents told of their value: the clear ringing sound of the purest gold was heard, as it struck against the soil.

Once more the disappointed architect mused; but it was only for a moment.

“By fair means or by foul,” he shouted fiercely, grasping the shoulder of the old man with one hand, and presenting a naked dagger to his throat with the other,—“by fair means or by foul I'll have it. Complete that plan, or you die on the spot!”

“Violence to me!” said the graybeard—“ha! ha! ha!”

Even while his scornful laugh echoed in the ear of his opponent, he had seized him with the gripe of a tiger, and, exerting a strength to which that of a giant might have seemed weakness in the comparison, flung him at full length on the sand. It was only the work of an instant. There lay the architect, prostrate and overpowered, with the horrid cacophony of the malignant old man torturing his ears, like so many pæans in a barbarian triumph.

“Mercy!” cried he, faintly; “mercy!”

“Ha! ha! ha!” laughed his conqueror,—“you thought to terrify me. But, rise: I seek not your life.”

The humbled architect arose, looking crest-fallen, miserable, and most dejected.

"Now," continued the old man, "are you satisfied with my power? You have tried to bribe me; and, that failing, to compel me by force: how have you succeeded?"

The questioned party shook his head sadly, and said nothing. The interrogator proceeded.

"But I am still not indisposed to part with this plan, if I can obtain what it is worth."

"Name your price," cried the revived architect: "if I have it in the world, it shall be yours."

"It is a sorry price I have fixed on it, after all," continued the graybeard, with a fearful leer; "a plan so perfect that it would make the fame of Vitruvius himself. But still, as I don't care much for it, and as I have made up my mind to part with it, who pays the price shall have it."

"Name it! name it!" again cried his impatient auditor: "'tis thine if mine."

"Thy soul," said the little old man; "that's the price."

The horror-struck architect sprang back as from a deadly blow; making, at the same time, involuntarily, the sign of the cross between him and his companion. He then again fell senseless to the earth.

The demon—for he it was who had held this colloquy with him—immediately vanished.

When the architect recovered sensation, he arose and slowly sought his home. There, heedless of the entreaties of his old housekeeper to take the least refreshment, he sat for a while in a fit of abstraction, and then retired to his own apartment. It was in vain, however, that he essayed to sleep; the surpassing plan he had seen was perpetually present to his mind's eye; and he tossed and tumbled on his fevered couch all night through, tormented by restlessness, and sickened by envy of its unattainable excellence. With the dawn of the morning he left his bed; and from that hour, until the shadows of evening began to descend on the earth, he was busied in recalling to recollection those few fragments of that transcendent design which the evil one had scantily permitted him to behold. But his efforts were in vain. The more he wrought the less he effected.

to his own satisfaction ; and his memory seemed so completely at fault, that he forgot every thing connected with it which could be considered in anywise conducive even to the faintest imitation. Yet still was this sketch before him in all its magnificence and glory ; pillars, groined ceiling, windows, doors, towers, tracery, fret-work, foliage. It was like the autumn dream of a consumptive maiden — brilliant, but wholly indistinct ; beauteous, but altogether intangible.

“ I will forth and pray to God,” he said to himself : “ the vespers are ringing ; I will forth and pray for his aid.”

To the Church of the Holy Apostles he accordingly turned ; but even in the house of the Lord he found no peace. While his lips mechanically murmured an orison, his mind saw only the work of the demon ; and his eyes unconsciously compared the architecture of the noble edifice in which he prayed with that which he could erect if he possessed the desired plan. A waking vision absorbed his soul. He thought that he had obtained the object of his wishes—that he had commenced the work—that he had just concluded it ; his own hand was in act of laying the coping-stone on its highest tower, as it had laid the first mass of rock which formed its foundation, when behold, high above him in mid-air, he saw the satanic countenance of the fiend, and heard his horrid laugh ; and, at the same moment, like a card-castle constructed by infantile ingenuity, the whole structure fell in together, fading and dissolving from his view ; and,

“ Like to the baseless fabric of a vision,
Left not a rack behind.”

He hurried from the house of prayer with even faster footsteps than he had entered it.

Once more, and as it were unconsciously, he was walking on the sandy shore of the Rhine, close by the scene of the preceding evening's rencontre. It was later in the night than on that occasion ; and the silence and solitude of all around were proportionately increased. The hum of the sleeping city was scarcely audible ; and the only distinct sound was the murmur of the waters of the mighty river, as they rolled onward to their embouchure — which might, without much stretch of imagin-

ation, be likened to the voice of wailing for their inglorious end in the flats and sands of fenny Holland. Ever and anon, however, the countless turrets sent forth their sweet chimes as the hours progressed, like the voice of celestial watchers, telling of the course of time and of the length of eternity.

"Well met," said a harsh voice in his ear, as he paced along musingly. "Well met, brother!—ha! ha! ha!"

He looked up, and again beheld, at the Frankenpforte, the fiend. The wall was covered with the tracings he had made; and exhibited, in lines of living light, the magnificent plan which had made such an impression on the architect's imagination. It was a cathedral, complete in all its parts, of such a superlative beauty as was never before seen in this world. Oh, how his heart panted to possess it! Oh, how his eye did drink in the details of that splendid structure! but he felt that it would be a vain attempt to try to retain them. He pondered—he hesitated—the die was cast—he was lost.

"Well," continued the fiend, "will you have my plan at the price?" At the same time, with two or three careless touches of the wand he held in his hand, striking off a sketch of the grand portal, which made his victim's eyes glisten with wonder, and his heart dance within him with delight. "Yes, or no?" he asked. "Be brief, and delay not. I must elsewhere."

"Yes," faintly murmured the architect.

"Well, then, to-morrow at midnight in this spot," said the fiend, and disappeared in the same moment.

Another restless, wretched night was spent by the hapless man; and he arose on the morrow feverish and fainting. As he sat in the open window of his chamber, which overlooked the broad river and the huge city, and surveyed the spires and domes that rose around him in every direction, he thought within himself, with a feeling of pride, how he should like to add an ornament to the scene which would surpass them all; and then, by a natural process, his mind reverted to the spot he should select as the most commanding for the magnificent fabric which he intended to rear, less to the glory of God than to his own earthly honour. While he thus sat and thought, he saw his old housekeeper, Matilda, hasten forth; and he called to her in a friendly voice, to greet her, and ask whither she was going.

"I go, my master," she replied, after she had returned his salute; "I go to the Church of the Holy Apostles to have a mass read for the redemption of a poor soul I once knew, from the fire of purgatory."

"A mass for the redemption of a poor soul!" repeated he involuntarily. A shudder, which made his blood run cold, came over him, and he hastily closed the window.

"A mass for the redemption of a poor soul!" he exclaimed, as he paced the apartment, wringing his hands and weeping bitterly. "Alas! and who is me! for my soul there is no redemption I am damned—damned for ever! for ever, and ever, and ever! Oh God! oh God!"

The spirit of that Saviour who suffered for erring man swept over him: he knelt by his couch and prayed fervently to a God who never yet forsook the truly contrite of heart, nor refused consolation to the afflicted penitent. In this attitude he was found by the old housekeeper, on her return from church, after she had executed her pious mission. Little persuasion on her part sufficed to make him reveal the cause of his sorrow and deep despair. His heart was humbled—he told her all.

"Heaven forbid!" exclaimed she, in affright. "To sell thy soul to Satan! Oh, no! it must not be, my dear master. What would become of me if he claimed his bond?"

They mixed their tears together. It was a mournful scene to see a bold and bearded man weeping for his sins, and a gentle aged woman comforting him.

"I have it!" cried the old Matilda on a sudden, as if inspired: "I have it! You must go to your father confessor."

"Thank God!" said he; "I feel there is still hope for me. I go."

He went accordingly, and communicated to the pious man the history of the two past nights. The priest was religious, and he shuddered to hear the tale; but he was also a sensible and discreet man, and he thought how to profit by the circumstance. He was likewise a patriot, loving his country with a devotion uncommon to his state; and he fancied that, even as good oft cometh from evil, advantage to his native city might be derived from even this source.

"A cathedral," soliloquised he, ere he spake absolution to

the penitent, — “ a cathedral, which not alone will make Germany the first country in the ecclesiastical world, but also make Cologne its first city ! An edifice which will render my native place the wonder and the envy of all Christendom, to which pilgrims shall flock from the ends of the earth, and where saints may repose in perpetual glory ! It must be so.”

He opened a small shrine which stood in the sacristy of the church, and took therefrom a relic. It was a fragment of the true cross, which had been brought from Palestine by the crusaders, and which had performed several remarkable cures during its stay in Cologne.

“ Here, my son,” he said to the architect, “ take this, and go fearlessly to meet the foul fiend. Get the plan you tell me of into your possession before you subscribe the pact with your blood, and then shew him the sacred relic. I warrant you he troubles you no more. Go, and fear not. Cologne must not lose such a chance.”

It wanted just a half hour to midnight when the architect left his own dwelling, on his way once more to the place of appointment with the arch-foe of mankind. He was calm and collected ; his step was firm and free ; his countenance even expressed joy and pleasure : for his mind was at peace, his heart was relieved from its anxiety ; and he bore beneath his cloak, on his breast, the blessed fragment of wood, like a buckler, to render him invincible. At twelve o'clock he stood on the sand by the Frankenpforte : the fiend was there before him.

“ And now to business,” said the evil one ; “ I have much to do to-night. Be quick. Here's the plan ; and here is the compact. Just breathe a vein in your right arm, and sign this document with the blood. The plan is then your own.”

The architect bared his arm ; but he discovered he had neither lancet, nor knife, nor other sharp instrument wherewith to prick it. He fumbled in his pockets in vain. There was nothing to be found in doublet or hose which could answer the purpose. The fiend became impatient.

“ Here,” he said, “ hold this for a moment, and I'll find a sharp flint. I carry no knives about me. It is rather too hot where I live ; they would melt in our pockets there.”

The architect stretched forth his hand and seized the plan, as the demon stooped to find a fitting stone. It was only the work of a moment. When the tempter rose, he saw with horror his intended victim brandishing the blessed relic before him, and heard him lustily exclaim,—

“Avaunt, Satanas! avaunt! To hell with thee, in the name of the Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! By virtue of this true cross, avaunt!”

Satan was in truth astonished, as well he might be, to find himself outwitted by one whom he had thought so completely in his power.

“I am vanquished!” and he gnashed his teeth, and stamped his cloven foot on the earth as he spake. “I am vanquished, it is true; but I shall still have my revenge.”

“Avaunt, Satanas! avaunt!” was the only reply made by his opponent, who still most sedulously crossed himself with the precious relic, and occasionally protruded it at the demon whenever he approached too near.

“I’ll have my revenge,” continued the prince of hell, “despite of your parsons and your other mummeries. The church you build from that plan shall never be finished; and, though you may not be damned, you will be—almost as bad for you—forgotten as its architect. Future ages will find it a fragment, and your name will never be known to posterity.”

So saying, he disappeared in the usual manner; that is to say, suddenly, with a fizz, a flash, and a foul odour.

Slowly and sadly the conqueror wended his way homewards. He had attained the object of his desire, yet still was he most unhappy. The words of the fiend had fallen like molten lead upon his heart, and he felt that they would be verified. Unfinished—unknown—forgotten! It was enough to make any man who set his heart upon fame sorrowful even unto the death. So he was. Next morning he caused a solemn high mass to be sung in honour of his victory, and in gratitude for his escape. He then commenced the erection of the cathedral. For a while it proceeded as well as he could wish. As each course of stone-work accumulated into walls; as each wall began to develop its parts and proportions; as pillars and portals began to emerge from the mass of masonry; and window and coigne,

buttress and tower, gable, and roof, and pinnacle, rose daily into altitude and beauty, he almost forgot the prophecy of the fiend in transport at the prospect. Nay, on the day the choir was completed, he even deemed that, according to his wont, the demon had dealt in lies; and, in the hope to utterly defeat him, he caused his own name to be deeply engraven on a massive iron plate, and placed high and conspicuously over the portal. But it was an idle hope, a vain delusion. Ere the body of the building had been begun, feuds of the fiercest nature broke out between the archbishop and the burghers of Cologne; the work was suddenly suspended in consequence, and never was resumed during the lifetime of the architect. He did not long survive this stroke; and it is said his death was so sudden, and accompanied by such peculiar circumstances, as left little doubt of its being a deed of darkness.

It was in the year 1248 that this stupendous structure was begun; and in the year 1499, that is to say, two hundred and fifty years later, they laboured at it still. Yet it is even now—five centuries and upwards from the date of its commencement—a mere fragment. Many princes have sought at various periods to complete it; but, from different causes, they were prevented doing so. It is a singular fact, connected with the history as well as the tradition of this cathedral, that, though sought for with the most interesting zeal and the most intense avidity by the learned of Germany, the name of the architect who designed it is utterly unknown.

This is the legend of the plan of the Cathedral of Cologne.

THE ERECTION.*

At the time the erection of this noble edifice commenced, an aqueduct was also planned, contemporaneously with it, for the supply of the city with purer water than that of the Rhine. The architect of the cathedral was made aware of the circumstance, and asked his opinion of the result of the work by his brother architect of the aqueduct.

“By God!” said he, swearing out—for he was a swear-

* “Deutsche Sagen, von den Brüdern Grimm.” Berlin, 1818.

ing man—"thy little aqueduct will not be finished before my cathedral is completed."

Now, why did he say this? Because he, and he alone, knew the exact situation of the spring from which the water for that work was to be supplied. No; I had forgotten; his wife also knew it; for he had disclosed it to her, and enjoined her, on the peril of soul and body, not to reveal it to any one.

The erection of the cathedral proceeded rapidly; but the foundations of the aqueduct were not even laid, because a spring or source for its supply with water could not be discovered by its architect. Great was his grief and discontent at this; for he saw that his reputation would be ruined for ever if he was found unable to complete the work which he had planned. His wife, however, who was a prudent woman, bethought her of a means of saving her husband's reputation. Putting on her ruff and head-gear, she went on a visit to the house of the architect of the cathedral, at a time of the day when she knew he would not be at home. She was well received by her friend his wife, and entertained in the best manner. Old passages in their life were revived and talked over with an earnestness and pleasure which none but women can feel on such occasions. One topic led to another; the warmth of friendship and the excitement of Kirschenwasser had their influence on both ladies; the conversation on their private affairs flowed more freely; and, at length, the hostess, under a promise of inviolable secrecy, proceeded to communicate to her friend the secret of the spring or source of water for the aqueduct.

"Now," said she, "you'll promise me never to tell any one?"

"Truly," replied the other.

"Not even your man?"

"No; assuredly not."

"Well, then," she continued, "as all is right now, I'll just let you know the secret. But my husband would have my life if he found that I had discovered it to any one."

"Oh! don't fear me," said her friend.

"Oh, no! I don't. If I did, would I tell you? Well, then, it is"—she whispered as she said it—"it is under the great tower of the cathedral, close to the foundations. That is the

secret; tell no one. If you walk past yourself, you will see a large stone—you know the Devil's Stone?—that covers it."

It need scarcely be said that promises of secrecy were renewed, with the same intention of keeping them as we generally find among our friends when they think they may profit by breaking them.

The next day the architect of the aqueduct, armed with the civic authority, proceeded to the place pointed out by the indiscretion of his brother architect's wife, and sunk a well beside the Devil's Stone. The result answered his expectation. Water of the purest quality bubbled up in immense quantity before they had dug three feet below the surface.

All this was witnessed by the architect of the cathedral. He saw his secret was discovered, and his assertion in a fair way to be falsified. There was nothing but shame in store for him; and he had no prospect but of vexation for the remainder of his life. The foundations of the aqueduct were laid—the work proceeded. Rage and resentment overpowered him; he cursed the sacred edifice in the erection of which he was engaged; and then died of a broken heart.

From thenceforward the building never advanced a single inch towards completion; as it then was, so it is now—in the same condition he left it. In vain did his successor labour to finish it; in vain did the prince-archbishop pray and punish, reward and threaten, those engaged in it; architect after architect was employed, but still the work made no visible progress. What was raised in the day was destroyed in the night; and the portion added in the evening, notwithstanding all the security of clamps and covering during the hours of darkness, was always found reduced to the original level in the morning. Thus the thing went on for a year; until, at length, all further attempts were relinquished in despair. The cathedral remains to this day as that wicked architect is said to have left it,—a great effect produced by a trifling cause.

Another tradition, however, assigns a different cause for the incompleteness of the fabric.

The devil was vexed, as well he might be, at the progress which was daily made in the erection of this truly stupendous temple to the true God ; and he resolved to interrupt it, if he could, by any possibility, do so. To this end, disguised as an elderly gentleman, to prevent the annoyance of a crowd, he sought out Herr Gerhard, the architect. Herr Gerhard, who was a freemason as well as an architect, of course knew his visitor at once ; and, as he was a polite man, as well as a clever artist, he received him with all due courtesy. Refreshments were offered by the host, and declined by the guest.

“ Thank ye, thank ye,” said the prince of darkness ; “ your meat and drink here on earth is not over much to my taste ; they are not high-seasoned or hot enough for me.”

“ But I can give you a glass of Portugal wine,” said the architect. “ I had it direct from London. You may trust to that for heat. It is four parts brandy. It is real London Particular, I assure you.”

“ Thank you all the same,” replied Satan ; “ but I have had a morning draught of Phlegethon. Besides, I come to you about business. You are a little in the sporting line, eh ?”

The host nodded his head in token of assent.

“ I am rather that way myself,” continued the devil ; “ and I come to make a bet with you about the building of the cathedral.”

Now, betting was the soft part in our architect’s composition ; and so, although he was otherwise a worthy, religious man, and a polite one, too, as we have just seen, he let himself be taken in by the cunning serpent.

“ I’m your man !” said he, slapping the devil’s thigh with his hand. “ What’s your wager ?”

“ That I’ll bring a brook from Treves to Cologne single-handed, before you complete the cathedral, how many hands soever you may employ on it.”

“ But you’re the ——” (the polite host hesitated)

“ —— Devil,” added his guest. “ Well, what of that ?”

The architect bowed, and smiled, and looked knowing, as men generally do when they are about to be very much outwitted.

"I'll work single-handed," continued the fiend. "One is one. You may multiply your present number of hands by a hundred if you will. Can any thing be fairer?"

"Done!" exclaimed Herr Gerhard, who was now fairly caught. "When shall we begin?"

"The sooner the better," replied his guest, rising to depart.

"To-morrow, then," said he.

"To-morrow," said the devil, making his best bow at the door, and doubling up his tail lest it should cause him to trip as he stumped down stairs with his cloven foot.

"But the wager?" asked the architect rather falteringly.

"Your soul, if I win," said the devil. "Any thing of mine you may take a fancy to, if I lose. Good morning."

"Good morning," murmured Herr Gerhard, and sank senseless on a chair.

The apartment required fumigation all that day and night; for the fiend left behind him a smell almost as offensive as that of tobacco smoke.

Next day Herr Gerhard began to work in good earnest: every hand that could be had for love or money he employed; and all was activity from the Dombrüche, or cathedral quarry, in the Drachenfels mountain, to the proud city of Cologne itself. It may be easily imagined that, with such a stake, the architect was not slow; but neither was his antagonist idle. Days and weeks passed over; the efforts of Herr Gerhard were unabated; and, as he saw no signs of his opponent's labour, he began to look with confidence to success.

"What shall I require," said he one day as he ascended the highest of the two towers, which exist in the state they were then left to this day—"What shall I require from the cunning dog? He thought he had done me. Ha! ha! that's not bad either."

He reached the top of the tower; and, as he was rather a lusty man, he sat down on the windlass of the crane which, even now, stands there as it stood then. It was a noble prospect. The broad river flowed far below him; the vast city lay outspread at his feet; the flat fat country to the west, almost as far as Aix, was under his eye; and to the south rose the majesty of the Seven Mountains. He looked every where but towards

Treves; at last he looked to that quarter too. A flight of wild ducks rose from the ground in the direction taken by his eye.

"Quack, quack, quack," went their hundred ornithological tongues, while the whirr of their wings, as they sailed high over his head, added to his incipient confusion and dismay.

"What do I see!" exclaimed he in a tone of horror and affright.

The brook, like a thread of silver, was visible, creeping towards him in the direction from Treves. It was within a half hour's run of Cologne. He could perceive its progress as a man may that of the minute-hand of a clock. Every moment brought it nearer: every second was fraught with death and eternal destruction to him.

"Demon!" exclaimed he in a fit of rage, "you have won. But you shall never have your wager from me alive."

With these words he flung himself from the tower, and was shattered to pieces by the fall. The fiend, in the shape of a large black hound, sprang after him; but he was too late to seize him alive. Thus perished the foolish wight who would wager with the devil. Since his death, no further progress has been made towards the completion of the cathedral; it stands exactly as he is said to have left it.

The suicide and the spirit-hound were sculptured in relief high up in the fatal tower, whence the hapless architect had precipitated himself. And it is confidently asserted, by the enlightened populace of Cologne, that if you lay your ear to the ground by the Devil's Stone you will hear the gurgle of a brook, as it flows to the river, under the foundations of the cathedral.

Another tradition tells us that the suspension of the progress of the edifice was owing to the seduction of the architect's wife by the prince of darkness. She discovered to her insinuating lover the secret of the building communicated to her by her husband; and he made such an effectual use of it—the how is not related—that the structure was never finished.

THE DEVIL'S STONE.

As allusion has been made more than once in these traditions to the Devil's Stone, it may be as well to tell the legend connected with it.

According to all authentic tradition, his infernal majesty was very much annoyed at the commencement and progress of the cathedral. Day after day, and night after night, he was to be found flitting between Cologne and the Seven Mountains, where the quarries whence the stone for building it was extracted, were situated; but still he could find no means of putting a stop to the sacred work. At length, one morning, he saw the Chapel of the Three Kings just finished; the scaffolding was removed, and it stood forth in all its beauty. He could endure it no longer. Flying with the velocity of lightning to the Seven Mountains, he lighted on the summit of the Drachenfels; and, reaching to the cathedral quarry half way down the mountain, he picked up a huge mass of stone and flung it with all his might and main at the sacred edifice. By the particular interposition of Providence, in the shape, it is said, of a sudden hurricane from the N.N.W., the mighty mass fell a few feet short of its destination, and thundered down on the very spot on which it now stands. The claw-prints of the fiend's fingers are still seen in it. It is called, from this circumstance, the Devil's Stone (Teufelstein).

*

THE FIRE-BELL.

In the taller of the two grand towers which stand at the entrance to the cathedral, hangs the great bell, better known as the Fire-bell of Cologne. It weighs, according to Schreiber's statement, 25,000 lbs. To that bell attaches the ensuing tradition, which has been thus metrically rendered.*

The bell of Cologne cathedral had lost through time its tone;
 "Who casts instead another, the glory be his own!"

* By J. G. Seidl. This poem is given in Dr. Simrock's elegant little volume, entitled "Rheinsagen aus dem Munde des Volks und Deutscher Dichter." Bonn, 1837.

'Twas thus outspake the council of that proud city free ;
And Wolf, the founder, sought the work,* a bold, bad man
was he.

Fain would he see his handy-work high poised in middle air ;
Fain hear its deep and solemn voice the city call to prayer.
Fain would he have it hung aloft, in that gorgeous church's
tower ;
A wonder and a monument of his great skill and power.

* * * * *

Within the ample furnace verge the melted metal stood,
Awaiting his behest alone, to rush in fiery flood.
He oped with care its aperture, outgushing it did glow ;
“ Luck to the work ! ” — ’twas thus he spake — “ In God’s name
let it go ! ”

And forth it flashed—a lava flood—and quickly fill’d the mould ;
All-anxious were the gazing crowd, until the cast was cold.
The earthy husk is broken sheer, the bell to view is given ;
From crown to rim ’tis riven clean — “ a crack ! a crack ! by
Heaven ! ”

* * * * *

“ Once more,” thus Wolf, “ I’ll try the trick ! ’twere shame to
give it o’er.”

A second mould is fashioned soon, the metal glows once more.
The melted ore outgush’d again, the word in God’s name’s
given.

Again the husk is cleft in haste — “ another crack, by heaven ! ”

* * * * *

“ Once more,” in passion spake he — “ but, in God’s name, now
no more ! ”

In the devil’s name I’ll try it now—would it were so before ! ”
The metal glows like molten gold—thorough the chink it rushes ;
And, in the foul-fiend’s name, so free, into the mould it gushes.

* Bell-founding was and is an art in high repute in Germany, even at this day ; and various ceremonies are performed prior, during, and subsequent to the casting. The curious reader is referred, for particulars, to Schiller’s “ Lied von der Glöcke.”

The crowd, though struck with horror great, still watched
 around to see,
 What came of such strange casting—what came of flood so free.
 The mould once more is cleft in twain, the bell to view is given ;
 No cleaner cast e'er yet was seen 'neath the canopy of heaven !

* * * * *

In jubilee they bear that bell the crowded streets along ;
 All joy they heave it to its place, with tackle tough and strong ;
 'Tis hung within that massy tower, where to this day it stands.
 “ The trial of its tone,” cried Wolf, “ be the work of mine own
 hands.”

He pulls the rope ; the huge bell booms—Oh, God ! the fearful
 sound,
 Flung from its brazen throat ! 'Twas such, the city was astound.
 Some cross'd themselves—some stopp'd their ears—some hid
 themselves for fright :
 In madness and in wild despair, Wolf sprang from that tower's
 height.

* * * * *

Since then there hangs that fated bell, a warning to the bad ;
 A lesson to the wicked 'tis, its tale so deep and sad.
 The offspring of the skill of hell—the child of curses dire.
 'Tis now but toll'd in time of storm, of dread, or dool, or fire.

This ends the legends of the cathedral, at least those worthy
 of transcription here. The relics of the Three Kings ; the con-
 tents of the Golden Chamber ; the curiosities of the library ;
 the chapels and the shrines ; the tombs of the archbishops and
 other great people, *et hoc genus omne*, are left for the compilers
 of guide-books and travellers' manuals.

CONVENTUAL CHURCH OF SAINT URSULA.

After the cathedral, the next church in legendary importance is that of St. Ursula, and the eleven thousand virgins. Fifteen pictures, in the choir, tell the following story in vivid colours, and furnish a lively commentary on the countless skulls and bones which fill the edifice. Whether such a tradition as that of this maiden saint, and her miraculous retinue, had ever any foundation in fact, or whether, as Vogt and other authorities assert, for eleven thousand, we should read the name of one virgin (*Undecimillia*) alone, is not within the province of this work to decide. The legend is given here as it is generally related: that is all which is professed to be done.

ST. URSULA AND THE ELEVEN THOUSAND VIRGINS.

In the year of grace 220, Vionetus, and Daria his spouse, ruled over Britain. One thing alone was wanted to make them completely happy: they had no offspring. Early and late, morn, noon, and night, they put up their prayers to God, that the kingly stock of Vionetus might not be suffered to die with him. Years but added to their anxiety, in place of alleviating it. At length it pleased Providence to hear their prayer; but it was only, as it were, half conceded. Daria gave birth to a daughter. They named her Ursula. From her earliest youth upwards, to the maturity of womanhood, she walked in the ways of righteousness, and sought favour in the eyes of God; and she seemed to have found it abundantly. For she was beautiful beyond belief—far outshining all the virgins of her father's court; and her modesty, and all other maidenly virtues, were co-equal with her loveliness. So much, indeed, was she celebrated for them, that her fame extended itself, not only all over her father's realm, but also through the wide extent of Germany, as far as the Hercynian Forest, and induced Agrippinus, a powerful monarch of the Alemanni, to send ambassadors to Britain, with a proposal of marriage to her for his only son.

But the pious Ursula had given her heart to God; she, therefore, heard with unwillingness and much trouble the proffers of

the prince ; and when her father pressed her acquiescence in them, she mildly, but decidedly refused, on the ground that she had devoted herself solely to the service of her Maker, and that any earthly engagement would be incompatible with the due performance of its duties. Vionetus was much grieved at this resolution of his daughter ; but he did nothing to disturb it. On the contrary, he called together the ambassadors of Agrippinus, told them the result of his attempt, and prayed their master to excuse him of accepting the alliance tendered by them. The ambassadors, however, were unwilling to take this excuse, or to appear before their sovereign without accomplishing their object ; and, under various pretences, they prolonged their stay at the court for a considerable period after they had received their formal dismissal. In that time the king, Vionetus, had a vision of the night. He dreamt that an angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and bade him, in the name of the Most High, tell his daughter of her dispensation.

“ Say to her,” spake the celestial messenger, “ that she is permitted to marry ; for that God wills not the child should be a cause of sorrow to the father. The Lord has said it.”

Vionetus awoke in raptures ; and in due course communicated the heavenly command to his daughter. The omen was acquiesced in ; and the fortunate, or far-seeing ambassadors, returned to their master, accompanied by the beautiful object of their mission. To make her train worthy of his greatness and power, her father selected eleven thousand of the loveliest and best-born virgins in Britain ; and, on the day appointed, Ursula at their head, radiant in beauty, they embarked, hand in hand, from the harbour of Harwich, singing hymns in the praise of Him “ who preserveth those that go down unto the great deep,” and followed by the prayers and blessings of the king and all his people.

There was no man on board either of the argosies in which were contained this fair and gentle cargo ; nor were any of that sex trusted to navigate them. The power which protects innocence, and defends truth,—that power which “ tempers the wind to the shorn lamb,”—was with them, and stood in stead of nautical skill, and masculine strength, and every ordinary requisite for a voyage over the wide ocean. The hand of God guided them

through the untracked sea, and hushed the waves and stilled the storms. It is a glorious sight to imagine, — how much more so must it have been to see, — that splendid fleet, those thousands of maidens, pure as angels, fair as doves, standing on the decks, each vessel walking along the undulating waters, “like a thing of life,” the white sails swelled with the odorous airs of summer, and the vaults of heaven echoing to the melody of their sweet voices, which even the enraptured fishes flocked around to hear. Thus sped they on their way rejoicing for three days; on the fourth, still conducted by the invisible agency which piloted them safely o’er the pathless deep, they ascended the Rhine, and stopped before the city of Cologne.

At that time Cologne was governed, for the Emperor Maximin the Thracian, who reigned in Rome, by the Prætor Aquilinus. He was a Christian at heart, though his sovereign was a persecutor; and, on learning the quality and creed, and all the other circumstances of his visitors, he received them as beings sent by God. After they had refreshed themselves with all that this great city could afford, they proceeded up the river, passing the towns and cities on their way, with blessings from the simple dwellers on the shores, until they arrived at Basel, or Bâle. At this city they were met by Pantulus, the Roman prætor of Helvetia, accompanied by a crowd of Christians, and received with all honour.

One of the conditions under which Ursula accepted the proposal of Agrippinus for his son was, that on the celebration of the marriage, she should make the pilgrimage to Rome; and, in accordance with that condition, she was then on her way thither. Pantulus was aware of her resolution, and he had made every requisite preparation to facilitate the object of her toilsome journey. But so struck was he with the sanctity of the maiden, the devotion of her virginal body-guard, and, perhaps, with her transcendant beauty, that he determined on accompanying them himself. Collecting together a sufficient escort of the most sedate and sincere Christians in his legions, he preceded them in this extraordinary pilgrimage, clearing their road of all difficulties, and making their path over the rugged mountains as smooth as possible. In this guise they passed through Switzerland; and crossing the Mons Jovis, now known as the Great St. Bernard,

after much toil, and many privations, they arrived safe in Rome. For this act the Prætor Pantulus was canonised on his death ; and to this day he has an altar to his honour in the church of St. Ursula at Cologne.

It need not be said that they were warmly welcomed by the pope ; or that they excited the wonder and curiosity of the Roman people. So much, indeed, were they incommoded by the latter, that, after the holy father, Pontianus, who then sat in St. Peter's chair, had rebaptised, or rather confirmed them, and they had seen all the sacred objects which the eternal city then contained, at his urgent entreaty, they left that scene of profligacy and corruption, and wended their way over the mountains back again to the Rhine. The old chronicle from which this tale is taken adds, that Pontianus himself, as a mark of honour and reverence to the maidens, and to the power which conducted them such a distance, deposited his spiritual dignity in the hands of his successor, and, accompanied by hundreds of the higher clergy, followed the virgin train a-foot to the place of their re-embarkation, at Basel.

Once more these fair wanderers were on the waters of the Rhine ; and once more the shores were made glad with their celestial melody. Thousands upon thousands of the inhabitants of both sides of the river followed them on foot, keeping pace with the stately barks which bore them slowly onward adown the glittering stream : that mighty river itself, in full flood, is the best similitude to which to liken the countless and still-increasing crowds which accompanied their course. She landed in Mainz ; and was there received by her ardent bridegroom, Conan.

Conan was a heathen : the light of Christianity had not then reached the depths of the Hercynian forest, or penetrated to his father's kingdom ; but he was also an ingenuous youth, of amiable disposition, and possessed of all the virtues of paganism, together with a greatness of soul peculiar to those called barbarians at that period. A happy man was he to meet his young and beautiful bride, radiant with the light of heaven, and redolent of sanctity ; and happy was he, too, to see her surrounded by such a train of youth, and loveliness, and virtue ; but, when he saw the old pope and his clergy, their silver locks floating adown their shoulders, the fervour of piety overcoming

the helplessness of age, and decrepitude, and wasting toil, his noble heart was deeply touched. "Surely," thought he, "it must be a religion of truth, which has such votaries." He communicated his feelings to his bride; and in a few days became, as she was, a labourer in the propagation of Christianity. "It is probable," quoth the quaint old Chronicle from which this tale is taken, "that the selfsame angel of the Lord who appeared to Vionetus in his dream, had also prepared the heart of this young prince for the reception of the truth." After spending the honeymoon in the delicious neighbourhood of Mainz, they descended the river to Cologne.

At this time, the first movements of that terrific mass of Scandinavian barbarians, known by the name of Huns, were beginning to be felt at the extremities of the Roman empire.* Cologne is said to have been treated by them with great severity. The Chronicle, whence this legend is derived, states, that shortly after the landing of Ursula, her spouse, and their train of virgins and ecclesiastics, the Huns made themselves masters of the city. Among the first to meet death at the hands of these ruthless monsters were the maiden followers of Ursula. Life to them was nothing, when compared with the loss of their honour; and the barbarians, flushed with conquest and drunk with blood, were not men who willingly allowed any plea to bar their pleasures. Those hapless ladies, for resisting defilement, were martyred in all imaginable manner of ways—mutilated, crucified, slaughtered,—without compunction and without mercy. Of all that crowd of beauty, and virtue, and grace, and devotion, there was not left one alive at the end of three days. The venerable pope and his clergy were also despatched by these cruel savages. Ursula and her husband alone were left alive to the last, only that the scene of blood might be closed and crowned with their martyrdom. When all the others were disposed of, they too were slain. They suffered unheard-of torments; but they defeated their brutal

* The first considerable occasion in which history mentions that great people, "who," as Gibbon says (*Hist. Decl. and Fall Rom. Emp.* cap. 10), "afterwards broke the Roman power, sacked the capital, and reigned in Gaul, Spain, and Italy," was the invasion of the banks of the Danube, A.D. 250.

tormentors by the fortitude and even joy with which they welcomed their fearful fate.

A picture in the Church of St. Ursula represents the manner of their death. Conan is seen perforated with spears, and swords, and arrows; his eyes are fixed on his beloved bride alone; whether to find fortitude in her example, or to strengthen himself by her patient sufferings in his new faith, cannot be discovered; but still they appear filled with more of love than of devotion; which seems not unnatural, even in that awful moment, when it is considered in connexion with her superhuman beauty. She, more in love with heaven than with aught of this earth, expresses only the beatific hope of the future in her mild glances; and looks more anxious to console her husband under his torments, and excite him, by word and deed, to bear up against his cruel fate, and die in the belief of Christ, than touched with any thing like human sympathy. It is a heart-thrilling composition; yet it is a pleasing one withal.

In a chapel, near the choir, stands the tomb of St. Ursula. She lies extended, with her hands folded across her breast, on the black slab which covers it; at her feet is a white marble dove, the emblem of her own innocence and spotless purity. This dove is said to rest on the spot where her bones are interred.

A story is told of the discovery of her remains, which is not a little remarkable, if it be true. As the pious Cunibert, archbishop of Cologne (A.D. 636), one day celebrated mass at the altar of this church, a milk-white dove entered, and, after fluttering about his head for a while, flew to the place where those effigies now rest, and began to scratch the earth with its little beak and claws. The archbishop and all present pronounced it a miracle; the soil was removed with every solemnity; and, behold! the bones of the beautiful Ursula were discovered beneath it. How they were identified, is not related in the source whence this story is drawn; but the present monument was erected to protect them, and commemorate the discovery. The dove was not forgotten in the work.

An old Rhenish rhymers* has sung the adventures of one

* Meister G. Hagen "Reimechronik."

of the eleven thousand virgins—St. Kordula—in a very simple strain ; of which a rude, free version is subjoined. It is an allegory of hope and faith ; and may not be unprofitable to those who want both, or either. The author is of the time of the Minnesänger,—one of those Teutonic troubadours, to whom the literature of modern Europe is so largely indebted, without consciousness or acknowledgment ; and who were generally as excellent men as they were good poets. A composition of this kind cannot be otherwise than acceptable.

ST. KORDULA.

While slew the Huns these maidens fair—
Eleven thousand then they were—
In horror and in deep dismay,
One of their number fled away ;
Kordula hight, whose loveliness
In all the land none could surpass.
Concealed within a bark's broad womb,
She lay 'till matin time had come ;
But, while she there in anguish lay,
She saw, as between night and day,
Her sisters' souls to heaven up-rise,
Flocking, like birds, into the skies.
She saw them gain its golden door,
Angels of light sped on before ;
And then she saw them glory-crowned,
And heard their songs celestial sound,
As bent they low before the throne
Where our Redeemer sat alone.
“ God's pardon,” cried the beauteous maid,
“ On earth I have too long delayed ;
And if my flight be not forgiven,
Mayhap I ne'er shall dwell in heaven.
Sweet Jesus, wash away my sin,
And grant that I thy grace may win.
This moment wend I to my fate,
My life to thee I consecrate ;
And follow joyful, without fear,
The path that took my sisters dear.

Death, from the foeman's hand, is naught,
Compared with what by it is bought.
Who would not free from earth's bonds sever,
To dwell in bliss with thee for ever?"
The maiden spake, and sought the shore —
In one short hour she lived no more.
Upon thy lovely banks, oh, Rhine!
Poured her pure blood like new-pressed wine.
Can it be doubted, that she got
The high reward she so well sought?
Or that, amidst the maiden choir,
She now, in glory, strikes the lyre?

List what befel that very day
To Attila, as there they lay.
That fierce Hun king, that "scourge of God,"
Saw, as the scene he proudly trod,
A sight that shook his soul with fear;
He saw a countless host draw near,
Thick as the sands are in the seas,
Thick as the leaves are on the trees;
All full apparelled for the fight,
Which filled his soul with dool and fright,
And made him take to speedy flight.
From Cologne's walls, that very hour,
Shorn of his pomp, stripped of his power,
Without a word, without a blow,
He sped like to the hunted roe;
And never more he entered there. —
'Twas God that did it, readers fair.

ST. MARY O' THE CAPITOL.

The Church of St. Mary o' the Capitol is situated on the Capitoline Mount of Cologne; the spot where the capitol of that city once stood when it was in the possession of the Romans.

It was founded by Plectrude, the wife of Pepin of Herstall, and mother of Charles Martel, in the latter part of the seventh, or the beginning of the eighth, century; but, having suffered considerably in the invasion of the Normans in the eleventh century, it was almost altogether re-edified subsequent to that period. It possesses many valuable works of art in painting and sculpture; but, perhaps, the most interesting among them is a small group of the Virgin and Child, connected with which is the following beautiful tradition.

HERMAN JOSEPH.

On the south-east side of the stately Church of St. Mary o' the Capitol is an elegant gate in the pointed Gothic style, with four niches, on which the legend of the Three Kings of Cologne is sculptured in ancient workmanship. Close by this entrance—from that circumstance called “The Three

Kings' Gate"—in days of yore dwelt a poor but God-fearing couple, with one only child, named Herman Joseph. The father was a shoemaker, and the mother assisted him in his business.

From his earliest years Herman Joseph evinced an uncommon degree of piety and goodness. He was one of the best of sons; and never gave his poor parents the slightest cause of distress or complaint. When he was sufficiently old they sent him to school; and every morning on his way thither he turned first into the Church of Mary o' the Capitol, and offered up a prayer before the image of the immaculate Mother of God, and the infant Saviour in her arms, ere he proceeded further. On play-days, also, instead of wandering abroad like his schoolfellows, and other boys of the same age as himself, he always sought this church; and there, kneeling before the sacred images, would tell them, in the infantile simplicity of his little heart, all that he had learned, all that he wished to learn, all he had done, all he had suffered; in a word, all his little "hopes, and fears that kindle hope;" and then he would pray for their blessing and assistance with a most edifying devotion. Nor, as the legend runs, was he unheard or his prayer unheeded. The infant Jesus often spoke to him in the words of encouragement; and always bade him welcome to the church whenever he could visit it: while the mild and gracious Virgin smiled approvingly upon his confidence in her, and comforted his little heart when he wept or had cause of sorrow. He would fain play with the Saviour of the world, as children are wont to do with each other; but he could not reach him, as he sat on his mother's knees, for the pedestal on which they were placed was far too high for his diminutive hands to reach. This was a source of considerable grief to him. But the gentle Mary consoled him, and promised that when he grew taller he should have his wish gratified. Thus sped a couple of years.

Meanwhile Herman Joseph increased in size, and also in godliness. He was now a great boy, and could reach the feet of the Virgin with his hands. It was a happiness to him to touch the hem of her garment. His piety increased in fervour with his strength, and years, and knowledge; and all his spare hours were spent in the church praying to his dear friends—for he

looked on them as such—or in kindly conversation with the blessed Mother and her Saviour Son on the past or on the future. One day, that his own poor mother had rewarded him with an apple of wondrous beauty, he hastened to find his heavenly playmate for the purpose of presenting it to him.

“Here,” he cried, as he reached the group; “here, here! mother gave me this beautiful apple, and I give it to you. You will take it from poor Herman Joseph, won’t you?”

As he spake, he held forth the apple—which was, in truth, a lovely one to look at—and the infant Jesus stooping from the arms of the Virgin, took it from his hand. The joy of the poor child, Herman, was indescribable; never before was his little heart made so glad. From thenceforward, daily, he always brought something rare or sweet from his own humble meal to give to his dear playmate; and it was ever received with pleasure, and acknowledged with grateful thanks.

Years lapsed in this manner, and Herman Joseph grew to be a goodly youth. His parents now took him from school, with the intention of putting him to learn his father’s trade; they were unable to afford him any further education. This was a source of great trouble and perplexity to him; for he loved learning for its own sake, and wished for nothing more than to be wise. In the sorrow of his soul, he sought his friends in the church; and there, prostrate before them, poured out his grief in a flood of bitter tears.

“Herman Joseph, my child,” spake the soft sweet accents of the gentle Mary; “what ails thee? what would’st thou?”

The poor lad told her all, sobbing the while as though his heart would break.

“Be of good cheer, my child,” said the kindly Mother; “be comforted; it shall not be.”

The image of the infant Jesus, which sat on her knee, smiled benignantly, and nodded its heavenly head at the youthful suppliant, as if in affirmation of the Virgin’s words.

“Go, my child,” continued she; “you know the choir of this church? Go there at once; and, at the left arm of the cross, close by the door, you will see a large stone set in the wall. Remove that stone, and you will there find all that is necessary for you.”

“With a brimful heart and a tearful eye,” as one of the sweetest of nature’s poets sings, the happy Herman thanked his patroness and protector, and hastened to do as she had directed. He discovered the stone without the least trouble, and removed it without any difficulty. Beneath it he found a treasure, not large in amount it is true, but still amply sufficient to indemnify his parents for the expenses of his future education, and redeem him from the necessity of following a low mechanical operation for a mere livelihood. His sorrows were now at an end; and from that day forward he devoted himself to learning, piety, and the practice of every virtue which adorns human nature. He did not omit a matutinal visit to the miraculous images which had so effectually befriended him; but neither Virgin nor Child spake to him ever after.

He had now arrived at man’s estate; and it became incumbent on him to adopt a profession. There was no hesitation in his choice; the whole tenor of his life inclined him to the service of God: and he therefore entered the church, and took holy orders as a monk of St. Benedict, in the Monastery of Steinfeld, on the Eifel, at some distance from his native city, Cologne. There, night and day, with little rest, and no intermission during his waking hours, did he devote himself to the study of philosophy, theology, and all those sciences which could make him thoroughly conversant with his profession; but in the meantime such was the ardour of his zeal for learning, and such the intense attention he gave to it, that almost all things else in the world were forgotten. Nay, he nearly forgot his benefactress, the blessed Virgin, and rarely thought of her, but on occasions of distress,—so completely were his faculties absorbed by the occupation of study. Thus matters went on for a time. All of a sudden, however, he discovered a singular and incomprehensible change in the nature of his mind. The more he read, the less he remembered; the more deeply he thought, the less able was he to draw any conclusion;—memory, the power of combination, the faculties of his soul, appeared all at once to have forsaken him, and he seemed to himself a being without consciousness, or reason, or knowledge,—an intellectual ruin, ready to crumble into dust and nothingness at the first rude touch. In this direful state he happily bethought him of his long-forgotten

friend and benefactor, the blessed Mother of God, and his resolution was rapidly formed. That very night, with the permission of his superior, he set out for Cologne; and the next morning, at early dawn, he was kneeling before the group which had delighted his infantile days, and formed the hope and the happiness of his adolescence.

"Mother of God," he prayed, his eyes dim with the tears of contrition, "Mother of God, forgive my ingratitude. Sweet Jesus, pardon my sins."

From morning till night he remained in that penitent posture, nor ever removed from the spot to take refreshment or rest. With the fall of darkness on the face of the earth, fell also a deep sleep on his senses; and in that sleep he had a vision, sent no doubt, from heaven. He thought that he strayed in a wondrous lovely garden, amidst shrubs, and flowers, and fruit, and foliage of the fairest hues, the sweetest taste, and the most exquisite odour; and that all around him were birds of the gayest plumage, perched on the trees, singing joyful songs, and making the skies vocal with a music far beyond that of this world. Sparkling streams, bubbling fountains, and gurgling brooks, stealing now through the shadows of the soft green bowers, anon laughing out in the bright light of the atmosphere—for no sun was visible, though the clearness of the sky greatly transcended his brilliancy,—met his eye at every turn; and his ear was enchanted, while his spirit was rapt in ecstasies of holy joy with the melodious music of millions of celestial beings, singing the praise and the glory of God. As he wandered on through this scene of beauty, he could not help thinking that he was in Paradise; and his suspicions were made certainty when he saw sitting beneath an alcove of amaranth, at the bottom of a magnificent mead of asphodel, which stretched around, further than even the imagination could reach, the identical Virgin and Child, before which he had all day knelt and worshipped. Oh! how glad it made his heart, to meet again his old friends in this happy region. He approached them quickly; and as he neared the spot where they sate, they rose to receive him. The Virgin advanced to meet him; the infant Jesus clapped his little hands with delight; and the celestial host pealed forth Hosannah, in the deepest and most perfect diapason. The birds, too, sang

sweeter than before ; the streams and fountains sounded in their beds like silver bells, and the very trees made music with the motion of their leaves and branches.

“ Herman Joseph,” said the Virgin, “ enter our abode—be welcome ! ”

He entered, conducted by the Mother of God. There he beheld a table set out in all the magnificence of heaven. Angels of all ranks and degrees in the celestial hierarchy,—seraphim, cherubim, saint, and martyr, stood around in troops ; the place was transplendent with the light of their beauty, as they waved their bright pinions in welcome of the Saviour, his maiden Mother, and their pious guest ; and nothing can be compared with the melody of their song, as they poured forth the note of praise to the Lord and his chosen. But what surprised the sleeper more than all he had yet seen, was the nature of the banquet itself. The table from end to end was covered with the gifts and offerings which had been made by him in his juvenile days to the group in the church of St. Mary o' the Capitol, and accepted by the infant image of the Saviour ; nothing besides decorated the board.

“ You are welcome, my child,” spake the Virgin, as she seated him beside her ; and the little Jesus from her lap reached out the identical apple which he had presented to him as his first offering.

“ You are welcome,” lisped the Child ; “ you are welcome.”

With these words he awoke. The brilliant scene was no longer visible ; he was alone in the church, still kneeling at the foot of the altar of the Virgin : but the sacred images, notwithstanding the darkness abroad and around, were enveloped in such an intense light, that he could not doubt the reality of his dream, or the certainty of his forgiveness. He arose, and returned to Steinfeld, first bidding an eternal farewell to his father and mother. There he lived till his death, in the odour of sanctity. His learning was as great as his piety ; and both were increased every year he survived this vision. He was buried where he died, regretted not alone by his brothers, but by the world. In after years he was canonised.

At the further end of the right hand nave of St. Mary o' the Capitol, as you enter the church, is a group in marble, com-

memorative of St. Herman Joseph's first pious action. He is seen in that representation holding forth the beautiful apple given him by his mother; while the infant Jesus stoops from the lap of the Virgin, and reaches out his little hand to take it. The vignette at the head of this legend is a copy of that group.

The miraculous in this celebrated church is not, however, entirely confined to the preceding legend, and its agents and actors. There is an old crucifix within its walls, of which equally strange stories are related. One will suffice here. It is very brief.

THE PAINTER AND THE CRUCIFIX.

"Do not, I entreat you, as you value your life, your salvation in the other world, touch that crucifix: the curse of the Lord is on whoever profanes it with his hands."

"But I will, though, even were I to be annihilated the moment after; and what is more, I'll do it this night."

"Nay, nay, be not so bold," cried a dozen voices at once; "we but joked thee to try thy mettle. Let the wager be withdrawn; we'll none of it."

This dialogue, which almost explains itself, occurred in a wine-house, situated at the corner of a stinking lane, known as the Rinkenpfuhl, in the Aachener-Gasse, or High Street, leading to the gate of Aachen, or Aix-la-Chapelle, in Cologne. The interlocutors were a wild young artist, and his boon companions, who had met there for a carouse; and the occasion was a wager made by him, in a moment of mad intoxication, that he would paint over with brighter colours the black and unsightly crucifix in the church of St. Mary o' the Capitol, which it was commonly deemed inevitable death even to touch.

At midnight, accordingly, heated with Hocheimer, he sallied forth on his sacrilegious errand, notwithstanding the repeated remonstrances of his friends and brother carousers, who were recalled to something like sense by the horror which struck them at the bare idea of the crime. He staggered along the

narrow dark streets of the dirty city, bearing his pots in one hand, and his pallet and brushes in the other, and arrived at his destination without encountering a single human being. It does not, however, follow that he was altogether alone : whether it were fancy, or whether it were reality, cannot be now ascertained, but he was preceded by a lambent flame, like an *ignis fatuus* all the way, and ever and anon he was startled by the yelling of a huge black hound, which made itself visible and invisible in the most extraordinary manner. The town was buried in deep sleep, and even the watchers slumbered on their posts, as he passed through the deserted streets. Just as the midnight bell boomed from the cathedral, echoed back by the varied peals of the other churches and public structures, he stood at the great gate of the sacred edifice. One moment only he hesitated ; for, at the entrance to the consecrated ground on which the church stands, the flame that had lighted him thither disappeared, and his guardian angel was heard to whisper him, in "the still small voice of conscience," to desist from his unholy purpose. But it was only for a moment. In another minute he stood before the symbol of our salvation, preparing to desecrate it for a paltry bet. He looked around him with horror ; and paused ere he proceeded in his task. The very graves seemed to speak to him ; and he thought their lifeless tenants, in hollow tones, bade him back : but the demon of false pride had too powerful an influence over him ; he felt as though he would rather face certain death than deserve the ridicule of his comrades ; and with a resoluteness and determination worthy a better cause, he began the work of sacrilege. Raising himself on a level with the face of the figure of the dying Christ, he stretched forth his hand, armed with a surcharged pencil, to paint, first, the forehead. He had scarcely touched it, however, when he perceived an unwonted sensation in the extended limb. Feeling had fled from it at the very instant of contact : hand and arm hung for a moment powerless and dead by his side, and then dropped off, even as the withered leaf of an aspen in an October wind. He sunk senseless to the earth, and remained there until the hour of matin service, when he was found by the sexton, and conveyed to his own home. That day he confessed his sins to the archbishop ; the same evening he was seized with raving

madness; and at the moment of midnight—the moment of the sacrilege, just four and twenty hours after he had desecrated the image of his God, he died in unheard-of agony.

THE CHURCH OF THE APOSTLES.

The Church of the Apostles is one of the most striking monuments of ancient German art extant. It is in the Byzantine style of architecture, imported into northern Europe, most probably, by the Crusaders; but, undoubtedly, fostered and cherished by the patronage of Theophania, wife of Otho the Great, herself a Greek princess, and daughter of the eastern Emperor Romano,* who lived in the middle of the tenth century.

A tradition, which would seem to refer to the re-edification of this noble structure, is appended.

JOST VON BÜHL, THE WILY MERCHANT.

“When the last day comes, and God and his apostles sit in judgment, weighing man’s sins in the balance of justice—in that hour of dread and danger, and great tribulation,—what shall I throw into the scale to make weight against mine, for they are many and grievous? What will prevent them kicking the balance against my poor soul?”

It was thus spake to himself a wealthy merchant of Cologne, Jost von Bühl by name, as he tossed to and fro on his couch, wooed to sleep in vain by silken pillows, Holland sheets, Eyder-down cushions, and brocaded coverlet.

“What shall I do? Alas, and wo is me!”

He tried to compose himself, but the effort was ineffectual: no longer the soft pinions of slumber waved drowsily o’er his head; no more “the comforter of the wretched” comforted

* Vogt. “Rheinische Geschichte und Sagen.” — Erster Band. S. 273, *et supra*.

him. Night succeeded night, and day followed day, but rest came not with them. A miserable man was he with all his wealth.

"Yet" — he spake aloud — "though my sins are heavy indeed, truly they may be outweighed by the quantity of stone required to raise a house to God! A lucky thought. Blessed be the Redeemer!"

He arose at once, and arrayed himself to go forth. The morning had just dawned as he left his noble mansion, and took the nearest route to the river. He passed along the Frank-gasse, and descended to the shore of the Rhine. There were a thousand barks at anchor in the semicircle formed by the city; and they lay on the broad breast of the calm, but mighty river, like children asleep on the bosom of a recumbent giant.

"God greet you, gossip!" spake the merchant to the skipper of a large barge, which lay deep in the water, almost to the gunwale's edge. "God greet ye! Ye have a cargo of stones to sell, methinks, by your trim."

"Truly sir," quoth the skipper; "and a better stone was never worked even from the Cathedral Quarry!—They are the best that Niedermennig and Bell* can boast of."

"Well, gossip," resumed the merchant, "an I be your chapman, what say ye shall buy them?"

"A thousand gülden," answered the skipper; "and they are cheap for the money."

"'Tis a bargain," said the merchant. "And now begin, at once, to discharge your cargo."

The skipper, right glad to have such a free purchaser for his freight, set about unloading his bark with great alacrity; and, by noon, when the merchant again returned, the great stones all lay on the quay, a goodly sight to see for those who understood their value.

"Ho! carts!" cried the latter, when he had paid the price stipulated—"Carts, carts!"

"Here, master! here!" answered a hundred voices; and

* Niedermennig and Bell are contiguous villages on the lake of Laach, both famous for their stone quarries, the former especially so.—Vide Schreiber, Mrs. Trollope, &c.

the crash and clatter of twice a hundred wheels gave notice of their coming.

Cologne was not then what it is now-a-days. Trade and commerce flourished at that period; and it was the centre of traffic to the countries of the north-west of Europe, as the chief of the Hans-towns confederacy. In fact, Cologne was then in all its glory—the London of transalpine Christendom.

“Load your carts with these stones,” said the merchant to the crowd of carters who thronged around him.

It was done. They were quick in obeying him; for he was known to be a liberal employer, in a place where every man was paid liberally.

“Whither, master? whither?” asked a hundred voices, when the cargo was in their conveyances.

“Follow me,” replied the merchant, solemnly.

And so to the Apostles’ Church they sped their way. A singular procession it was—the merchant slowly pacing at its head, crowds following and accompanying them. The creaking of the wheels; the clatter of the horses’ hoofs, as they clomb the stony streets which lead up from the river bank; the cries, and curses, and exclamations of the carters, caused a commotion along the whole line they had to pass; and many a speculation was made as to its destination, and many a guess as to its cause, among the young and old who encountered it. But none was the right one. As usual, the greatest amount of curiosity and conjecture was afloat among the fair sex, who filled the windows of the overhanging gables in all the streets through which the carts creaked. At length they reached the Apostles’ Church.

“Halt!” cried the merchant.

They halted, well pleased to have a respite for their horses.

“I would speak with the deacon of the church,” said he to the sexton.

The deacon and several of the presbyters, attracted by the unusual appearance of such a train, approached.

“You are about to rebuild your church?” quoth the merchant.

“Yes, sir, it is so,” replied the astonished deacon. “Behold the new foundation!”

He pointed, as he spake, to a deep pit in course of preparation for the meditated superstructure.

"It is well," pursued the merchant: "I have brought you stone to build it with."

"God be thanked!" exclaimed the deacon.

"A miracle! a miracle!" whispered the presbyters.

"A miracle!" shouted the echoing crowd.

"God be thanked for all his goodness," resumed the deacon. "Never was a more welcome gift made at the shrine of the Holy Apostles than are these noble stones. The blessing of Heaven will certainly be with such a benefactor to the church."

"The blessing of Heaven be on him," said the presbyters.

"Hurrah! hurrah!" shouted the crowd — "A saint! a saint!"

The mob of Cologne would have deified the sinful merchant, because, like all mobs, they were mad, and knew not what they did, more than silly sheep or any other gregarious animals; but the corps of carters, who had not been, as yet, paid for their labour, fearful that this idolatry might end in the destruction of the idol, and having, perhaps, the hopes of further reward in view, interposed to protect him from his insane worshippers.

"It is passing strange!" spake the deacon. "The reason of this princely present I fain would know; for, in these degenerate days, men build palaces for themselves in preference to houses for the living God: and rather will they lavish their money on pleasure than pay his priests to pray for their souls. Then say, good sir, say, wherefore is it, or why, this unwonted munificence?"

"That is my secret," replied Jost von Bühl; "and I shall keep it. But, in return for the gift, I would willingly have a doubt cleared up in my mind?"

"It is our duty, and shall be our pleasure, to remove all doubts from the mind of such a worthy son of our holy church," replied the deacon.

"These blocks are not light," resumed the merchant, pointing to the most massive of the number.

The deacon nodded assent, and looked all amaze.

"Well, then," continued the interrogator; "as you serve the apostles, you must needs know something of their power?"

Again the deacon bowed; but it was with a look of such proud humility as a churchman alone can wear when his egotism is in high action.

“Good!” exclaimed the merchant. “And now tell me,” he pursued; “think’st thou they could, either of them, raise single-handed, one of these blocks?”

The deacon looked at the querist, and the presbyters looked at the deacon; and the mob, who heard nothing of the question, but saw only the pantomime of astonished gesture, looked like a great booby boy at all the parties.

“Of a truth,” answered the churchman, “to the missionaries of God more than that is but as child’s play. To heave the whole of this church in the air would be as naught to those whom the Lord hath empowered to work miracles; and it is well known to all present, that the apostles may bear, not alone churches, but towers, and castles, and whole towns, in the hollow of their hand, and never feel the least fatigue.”

“Truly sir, so it is,” spake the presbyters in chorus.

“Death to him who doubts the power of the apostles!” shouted the fickle crowd. “Down with him! Down with him!”

Were it not for the renewed interposition of the anxious carters and the eager priests, that “blatant beast,” the mob, had now murdered the man they not many minutes previously would have deified.

“It is enough,” spake the merchant—“I am satisfied. The stones are yours, my secret is mine. God speed ye in the good work. Adieu!”

He paid the carters, and was borne home in triumph on the shoulders of the crowd, who would, perhaps, have immolated him with equal equanimity and equal satisfaction.

“I am satisfied,” he spake to himself. “I will wait for my reward till the last day; and then I shall tell the apostles to throw these blocks into the balance as a make-weight against my sins.”

That night he slept in peace—such is the force of fancy—or such, mayhap, the power of mental excitement.

And so the Church of the Holy Apostles, at Cologne, was re-edified.

In this edifice, in the time of Merian,* was a tablet, or picture, or representation, wrought in memory of a lady of the city, who was rescued by Divine Providence from the tomb wherein she had been buried alive, in a deathlike trance. It was wrought by herself, according to the tradition, of which more in another page.

THE CHURCH OF ST. GEREON.

“ In the Church of St. Gereon are interred the remains of a hundred martyrs, slain by order of Diocletian and Maximin,” says Merian.

St. Gereon is supposed to have been originally built by the Empress Helena, mother of Constantine the Great; but tradition carries its original foundation still further, and states, positively, as ignorance will ever do, that St. Maternus, the first bishop of Cologne, a disciple of St. Peter, made it the Basilica, or Cathedral, of that city. The following legend is related of this apocryphal prelate :—

ST. MATERNUS'S RESURRECTION.

St. Maternus,† the first bishop of Cologne, lay dead ; and his little flock, bereaved of their teacher, were sorely at a loss to supply his place. But, remembering the words of Christ to St. Peter, “ Feed my lambs, feed my sheep,” they resolved upon having recourse to him in this great difficulty ; and so

* Top. Archiep. Mogunt. Trevir. Colon., fol. 1646.

† Maternus, or Matrenus, a disciple and friend of St. Peter, is reckoned, in the ecclesiastical records of Cologne, as the first bishop of that city. There are no authentic particulars of his life extant ; and the apocryphal chronicles alluded to, are unworthy of credit. He is stated to have died A.D. 115 ; and Christianity would appear to have expired with him, for the next bishop of Cologne is named as living in the fifth century. Maternus is believed to have been a centurion in the twenty-second legion quartered at Mainz, on the authority of a monumental stone found at Mainz, bearing the following inscription :—“ Fl. Julio Materno vet. leg. xxii. P. P. F. missus, honesta missione ex duplicatis.”—Vide Voort. *Rhein. Gesch. und Sag.* B. 1.

one of their number was, accordingly, despatched to Rome, to pray the prince of the apostles for another bishop.

The messenger arrived in the eternal city in due time ; and in due time, also, he had an audience of the saint. Having explained the cause of his coming, St. Peter bade him be comforted, and thus spake in his presence, as to an invisible being:—

“ It is yet not the hour of thy rest, Maternus ; neither can I afford to lose thy assistance in propagating the Gospel. You must still labour to increase the followers of the word, and the true worshippers of the Lord.”

Then, addressing himself directly to the messenger, at the same time placing in his hands his own pastoral staff, he proceeded thus :—

“ Get ye to horse again as soon as may be, and return to the Rhine. When you reach Cologne, assemble the faithful around the grave of your deceased bishop ; and, striking the sod which covers his remains with this staff, call on him, in the name of God, to arise and live ; say that his aid is required as a champion of the cross for many years to come. *Vade in pace.*”

Hard and fast sped the rejoicing messenger homewards. He rested not, nor did he tarry on his road. The dead level of the Campagna di Roma disappeared behind his horse's hoofs ; he crossed the plains of Lombardy like a south wind ; he passed the perilous St. Gothard ; the rugged rocks of Old Helvetia were scaled by him ; the deep dim lakes of that “ land of mountain and of flood ” were navigated ; he rode over hill, and he rode over dale, until he reached Augusta, the modern Basel. There taking boat, he shot down the Rhine, swift as the foaming winter flood of that glorious river ; and reached Cologne, then Colonia Agrippina, in safety. It seemed as though he had been assisted onwards by angels ; for such a journey had never before been completed in so short a space of time. He was just forty days absent ; for he had been despatched on the evening of the interment of the saint ; and exactly that length of time had Maternus lain in the lap of earth.

In accordance with the directions he had received, he summoned together the faithful of the city — then few in number, and of the poorer classes — and proceeded at their head to the grave of the defunct bishop. In silence and in secrecy had they

buried him in the sands outside the *Porta Flammæ* (the present Pfaffenpforte); and silently and secretly did they steal thither in the darkness of the night and the slumber of the city; for a persecution was then raging, and none were safe from its fury who professed the creed of Christ. It was humble, very humble—the grave of this first bishop of a spot, subsequently styled “the holy,” for its superior sanctity, the number and zeal of its Christian population, and its countless crowd of ecclesiastical edifices.

A dim taper was all the light they dared exhibit; and it served but to make the scene and the solemnity more awful and imposing. Bareheaded and barefoot, clad in long, flowing garments of the gravest colours, the elders of that little congregation stood next the grave, forming, as it were, the inner circle; without them, garbed even as they were, stood the neophytes, and all those who were not yet among the regenerated, but who aspired to be so. The messenger stepped forward: in his hand he held the pastoral staff given him by St. Peter. Not a breath was heard; not a sound which could indicate life or motion was audible. He waved the sacred staff thrice, and thrice he repeated a short prayer; then, striking the grave slowly, he thus spake:—

“In the name of God, the triune in one, I adjure thee, Maternus, awake! arise! and live! Thy aid is required as a champion of the cross; for, as long as the Lord lets thee, abide among us!”

As he spake, the earth all around heaved; at first with a faint, tremulous motion, so slight as to be scarcely perceptible; but, as he proceeded, it became more sensibly felt by every individual present. At the close of the adjuration, the grave opened in the centre; and, clothed in his high pontificals, even as he had been buried, the defunct prelate came forth of it. He looked like one in a state of somnambulism. His eyes were closed; he seemed unconscious of the scene passing around him. No one who then beheld his countenance, fresh as at the moment of awaking from a bland slumber, would ever suppose that he had lain full forty days in the mould, the companion of worms, the prey of corruption, the stricken of death.

They led him to his humble dwelling in the same silence

and secrecy as they had sought his lowly grave ; and there left him in charge of twelve of their number during the remainder of the night. Next morning he resumed the exercise of those functions which had been so long suspended by the destroyer.

Forty years from that time he lived in the practice of godliness, preaching, and praying, and extending the true faith all around him ; and he had the satisfaction of not alone leaving a successor every way worthy of him in Cologne, but also of founding and providing for the spiritual wants of two other bishoprics, Tongres and Treves. Crowned with glory, in the fulness of years and of honours, he descended peacefully to the same grave he had miraculously vacated twice twenty years before ; and was buried on the spot where the Church of St. Gereon has since been erected.

The most miraculous circumstance connected with the story, is the total forgetfulness of his singular death, manifested by the saint during his second lifetime. He remembered nothing of what had occurred while he slept those forty days in the bosom of his mother earth ; and was with some difficulty brought to believe the occurrence at all.

It is to be hoped that others are not so incredulous.

THE DOMINICANS' CHURCH.

In the Church of the Friars' Preachers (now suppressed) the body of Albertus Magnus, first a brother of that order ; then, bishop of Ratisbon ; and, finally, a brother of the same order again, and a resident in the monastery, lieth before the high altar in a most costly monument, with a long and learned inscription, as beseemeth that wise man. His drinking-cup, of the clearest crystal, is accounted a rare curiosity by the brothers of the convent.

This great man, whose extraordinary learning acquired for him the reputation of a magician, while his piety and humility made him the friend of princes and pontiffs, the mediator of peace between contending parties, and the admiration and envy of the world, soon became the legitimate property of the legend.

Shortly after his death, the most remarkable stories were related of him, and believed at once by a credulous people, who fancied him equal to any thing supernatural, even in his lifetime. Of the many, a few are selected rather as a specimen than as a summary.

ALBERTUS MAGNUS, THE MAGICIAN.

In the year 1248, on the day of the feast of the Three Kings, the emperor William of Holland* arrived at Cologne to witness the imposing ceremonies of that high festival. Cologne was then in its glory : its merchants were princes ; and it stood at the head of the Hanseatic league on the Rhine. At this time Albertus Magnus resided in the Preacher's Cloister, having returned thither to pursue his studies in peace, after voluntarily relinquishing the bishopric of Ratisbon, to which, for his great learn-

* William, Count of Holland, was an anti-emperor, set up by Innocent the Fourth, in opposition to Frederic the Second, of the Hohenstaufen family, then under the papal ban.

ing, he had been advanced by the holy See. It was the mid-winter season; the frozen snow lay deep on the ground, and the rivulets which fell into the Rhine were fettered as with an icy chain. But notwithstanding this, the learned man sent a courteous message to the emperor, praying him and his court to a banquet in the convent garden.

"What can the monk mean?" asked the grand chamberlain, when the messenger had delivered his message.

"More than thou wotst of," answered the emperor, who was well acquainted with the learned man.

"But, surely, your majesty will not go in such a season to feast in a garden?" interposed the chamberlain.

"Assuredly my majesty will go," replied the emperor; "and my court shall all go with me too. So make ready."

The grand chamberlain departed grumbling, and the courtiers shrugged their shoulders in anticipation of the bitter day they would have to spend.

Accompanied by all his court, the emperor came in full state at the monastery. He was received at the entrance by Albertus, and conducted into the gardens. The sight that awaited them there was by no means of a prepossessing character. Thick frozen snow covered the earth,—the trees stood bare and leafless, their boughs and branches loaded with rime and hoar frost,—and not a blade of grass was visible above the dreary pall with which nature was decked. Indeed, the winter seemed to have fallen with a severity, unknown without, on that fated garden. Yet tables were ranged in regular order under what had been arbours in the summer season, and seats were disposed beside them at regular intervals. At the upper end was a sort of throne for the emperor. But the tables were uncovered: there was no sign of life besides the shivering courtiers in the garden; and the whole was a perfect picture of cheerless, wintry desolation.

"Most mighty prince, please to be seated," said the monk, bending his knee to the emperor.

The emperor suffered himself to be conducted to his seat.

"Command your court to take their places," continued the monk.

The emperor did as he was desired; and the miserable cour-

tiers sat down with a shuddering anticipation of the torture they would have to endure. It was a dark, dismal, dreary day; and they all seemed, in the gloomy light, like so many damned spirits in the abode of the despairing.

"Now, most gracious monarch," said the monk, "are you ready to begin your repast?"

The good-natured emperor nodded assent.

The monk then rose and clapped his hands. In a moment the sky was clear,—the frost and snow had disappeared,—the sun shone out; the trees were covered, not alone with leaves, but with fruit and flowers, which hung over the guests as they sat on a velvet sward which stretched down to the edge of the noble river. Birds sang in the bushes; grasshoppers chirped their mid-day song in the verdant grass; bees hummed about in search of honey-flowers; and the voice of ephemerals was every where heard in the air, speaking of warmth and pleasure. Summer seemed to have come all of a sudden. In the meanwhile, servants, in the costliest clothing, and of the handsomest shape, glided to and fro in crowds, but without confusion, bearing the richest viands and the most delicate wines, the produce of the Rhine and of other countries. The emperor and his courtiers banquetted like old Germans; that is to say, they ate and drank while they could hold. The bottle circulated freely; the wine-cup was repeatedly filled and emptied. Many of them felt themselves so warm, that they threw off altogether the winter clothing with which they had come provided, and reclined on the grass in their light under-garments, just the same as they were accustomed to do in the heats of summer. Thus they sat and revelled until night-fall. All at once, however, as the convent bell swung solemnly over the broad stream the hour of Ave-Maria, the servants disappeared; the viands were no longer to be found; the grass could not be seen for the load of snow which again lay on the bosom of the earth; and the trees became once more bare, leafless, and frozen.

The emperor laughed aloud. He had evidently been prepared for the scene; and a most ludicrous scene in truth it was. For here was a stalwart baron griping his surcoat in an agony of cold, and pulling it piecemeal from the ground to which it had been frozen when he cast it off him: there was a delicate

courtier, a carpet-knight, writhing on the earth to which he was fixed by the intensity of the frost, and from which he could be only separated by force ; and, at a little distance, was the gouty grand chamberlain, dancing a saraband to his own whistling, and making use of his fingers as castanets, to keep his extremities from perishing with the cold. It was such a scene as the emperor had rarely witnessed, and he enjoyed it highly.

When order had been in some degree restored among the courtiers, the emperor took his departure. He could not refrain from laughter all that night. Next morning he called his grand chamberlain, and ordered him to bring the chancellor of the empire. The chancellor came.

"I bestow on the monastery of Friars Preachers, to which Albertus Magnus belongs," said the emperor, "the broad lands which lie between Cologne and Roden-Kirchen. Make out the decree. Such a day have I never spent in my life as I did yesterday in their garden. I must reward them for the pleasure they afforded me."

The grand chamberlain ground his teeth, and looked daggers. The chancellor drew up the deed without a moment's delay.

"Take this to the monastery," said the emperor, addressing the grand chamberlain, "and say to Albertus, the monk, that thus I thank him for his entertainment."

The grand chamberlain could not disobey the commands of his sovereign ; but it is to be supposed that he did his office on that occasion with as little grace as a bee-stung bear. He was accompanied by a train of knights, according to the emperor's order ; and in due time arrived at the monastery.

"Welcome, most mighty grand chamberlain of the empire ; welcome, most noble knights : pray enter our humble dwelling, and partake of our poor hospitality."

It was thus Albertus Magnus greeted the official and his train as they approached. The grand chamberlain was flattered by this distinguished reception, and his followers were equally so ; it, therefore, required little persuasion to induce him to enter. Besides, it was the hour of noon, and he had not had his dinner. They entered accordingly, and found refreshments laid out for them in the refectory. After the emperor's message had

been communicated to the monk, and his acknowledgments offered in return for the grant bestowed on the monastery, the grand chamberlain prepared to depart. But his followers were not so anxious to leave the plentiful table to which they had been set; and when he summoned them to get ready, and accompany him back to court, they not only all hesitated, under pretence of fatigue, but some of them even flatly refused.

"What's to be done?" asked he of the monk. "The emperor required that we should return incontinent; yet these sows are swilling your wine to such a pitch that they will not be able to stand, if they are not got off at once."

"Leave them to me, most mighty grand chamberlain," replied Albertus, "I'll manage them for you."

He clapped his hands, and the servitors of the refectory entered.

"Bring me that case of Johannisberger, sent by the Graf von Greifenklaue last week," he said to them; "I would fain have a parting glass of the best with those friends who have honoured me with their fair presence this morning."

The servitors disappeared, but were back in a moment, bearing between them a large case of the generous beverage.

"Here's to our further acquaintance, most noble knights," spake the monk, when each man had been provided with a flask of that choicest production of the Rhenish grape: "Long live the emperor!"

"Long live the emperor!" echoed a hundred voices, raising as many brimming bumpers to the lips which uttered the words.

But, to their horror and dismay, as the beaded bubbles touched their tongues, they felt as though the liquor was molten lead; and, looking into their glasses, they saw that they were filled with living flame, which hissed, and seethed, and boiled in the frail vessel, like a draught from the fabled Phlegethon. In the meanwhile each man held his neighbour by the nose, as though to pledge him in that position. The sight sobered them at once; and the loud laugh of the monk and the grand chamberlain brought them immediately to a sense of their ridiculous situation. In a moment, as with one accord, they flung their glasses on the floor; and in the next, they had mounted their

steeds and were galloping away, as steady as men could be, from the gate of the convent.

The drollest circumstance, however, connected with this feat, was that which occurred to the emperor's court-fool, or jester. He, too, would accompany the cavalcade, to see with his own eyes the wonder-working monk, and, perhaps, pick a hole in his coat for ridicule or jest; and, like the others, he had also made more free than even folly would warrant, with the good wine which graced the board of the monastery. At the *dénoûment* which took place, however, he was discovered, under the table, sitting on his cap and bells, his sword of lath run up between his back and his doublet, and a long calf's tail in his mouth. The laugh was against him ever after.

THE MINORITES.

In the chapel of the Minorites, or Friars Minors, now secularized, lay the bones of Duns Scotus, of whom the well-known jest made by him on Charles the Bold, king of France, survives all his learned writings. Lord Bacon thus quaintly relates it.* “Charles the Bold allowed one whose name was Scottus to sit at the table with him for his pleasure: Scottus sat on the other side of the table. One time the king being merry with him, said to him, ‘What is there between Scot and sot?’ Scottus answered, ‘The table only.’”

Duns Scotus was a native of Ireland, who obtained great celebrity in his lifetime, and long after his death, for scholastic learning. He died in the convent of the Minorites, at Cologne, A.D. 1308; and left behind him fourteen manuscript volumes of his own composition. It is said that he was buried alive; and, tradition tells us that, having awakened from his trance, and forced the lid of his coffin, he perished in the vaults of the church with cold and hunger. On occasion of an interment, which subsequently took place, his corpse was found stretched across the steps leading to the entrance of the charnel house. He had gnawed away the fingers of one hand and part of the shoulder.

* Apophthegms. Original edition, in octavo. London.

THE RATH HAUS.

Turn we now to traditions connected with the civic structures of Cologne. The first and most interesting of these is the Rath Haus; and the following half-historical, half-poetical legend, associated with it.

THE BURGOMASTER.—THE ARCHBISHOP'S LION.

Among the many bassi-relievi which ornament the pediment of the Rath Haus of Cologne, the most prominent is one which represents a man fighting alone with a lion. It is directly over the central entrance; and, from its conspicuous situation, never fails to command the attention of the spectator. There is another to the same effect, a *replica*, over the inner portion, which is in a still better state of preservation. Their history runs thus :

In the year 957, Cologne was constituted an imperial free city by Otho the Great ; and, in the edict of that constitution, endowed with the privilege of self-government, and all the rights appurtenant thereto : the archbishop of the see being the nominal prince of the city, but no more ; the burghers having all the power and profit to themselves. At that period, Bruno, Otho's half-brother, was Bishop of Cologne, and he, of course, willingly acquiesced in these arrangements. But not so his successors. It is at all times a subject of discord to possess only a nominal power and a real responsibility, without profit or advantage ; and few men have ever been found ready to undertake them with honest intentions. The history of the ecclesiastical condition tells us that no churchman ever did so : and, therefore, there can be no wonder if the Bishops of Cologne sought to seize the substance as well as the shadow. Accordingly, various attempts were made by them to extend their authority over the city, and to possess themselves of the privileges conceded by the imperial edict to the citizens. They met with various success, though they were generally worsted in the end. Nothing, however, of sufficient importance to cause an open breach between the burghers and their titular sovereign occurred until the time of Hanno II., archbishop of that name, in the middle of the eleventh century.

Hanno was a specious man, and, by the appearance of great piety and self-denial, had acquired a high reputation for sanctity among the country people : the burghers, however, either more enlightened and less superstitious, or, perhaps, looking entirely to their own interest, held him in no such veneration as a prelate, and hated him as a prince. Calculating, however, on this influence, he laid claim to the feudal sovereignty of the city, and insisted on his rights, not alone to nominate the magistracy, but to receive the taxes levied on all articles of commerce entering or leaving the port. The burghers took fire at this encroachment on their liberties ; the entire city rose in arms as one man ; and the ambitious archbishop had some difficulty in escaping with his life. Many of his followers were slain, and his power completely annihilated in Cologne. He never troubled them afterwards. The lesson taught him by those brave burghers was remembered, also, by several of his successors.

At length Conrad von Hochstetten ascended the archiepiscopal throne of Cologne, in the year of God 1237 ; and, in a short time, the ancient feud between the city and the see was revived with additional strength and fierceness. Proud, impetuous, and unrelenting—but withal cunning and cautious in furthering his own plans—this prelate was not the man to relinquish any claim made by his predecessors, or scruple at the means of enforcing it. He began, however, with great craft. In the year 1248, he commenced the erection of that glorious structure, the Cathedral of Cologne, the plan of which had been designed, and the foundation laid, in the time of Engelbert the First, his predecessor. He well knew that the burghers were proud of this splendid structure, and he was determined to take advantage of the circumstance to advance his own pretensions, and effect the overthrow of their ancient freedom. At that period the privilege of coining was vested not alone in cities but also in noble and ancient families, who enjoyed it as a hereditary right ; and the most paltry, as well as the most extensive states, had a multiplicity of monies. The first bold step of this prelate was a decree for the abolition of this right, and an order that no coin should pass current except that which issued from his mint. The burghers of Cologne resisted this innovation ; and, as the officers of the archbishop enforced it without relaxation, a rebellion was the consequence.* That which he could not effect by power he succeeded, however, in effecting by stratagem : he found the results of a cunning insidious policy to be more abundantly advantageous to him than all the efforts of arms and physical strength. Quarrels were excited, by his agency, between the patricians and plebeians of the city ; discord was plentifully sown among all social conditions ; suspicion against each other was actively engendered in their hearts ; they were speedily disunited ; hatred of their respective ranks was fomented ; their power was dissolved ; and they became the prey of their designing enemy. Under pretence of conciliating both parties, he only made the breach between them wider ; and, from the position of a voluntary mediator, he stepped, at once, into that of an absolute master. It was not until his arbitrary

* Vide Westhofen and Berchem ; further on.

conduct and oppressive exactions were felt by all that the fatal error into which they had fallen was discovered. But it was then too late: for he had crowded the city with his troops; occupied the strong positions in and about it with his most faithful retainers; and filled with his own creatures and favourites all situations of trust, and all offices of eminence and honour in the magistracy and municipality. He retained the upper hand of the citizens until his death.

Engelbert, the second of that name, one of the noble and powerful family of Falkenberg, succeeded, and followed in every respect the footsteps of his predecessor. He continued to excite the plebeians against the patricians, and the patricians against the plebeians; and took advantage of their dissensions to increase and extend his own power and influence. To such a pitch did he carry this perfidious policy, that he soon became the most despotic prince that ever ruled the city. At length, he claimed the municipal treasure as his own, and sent his creature, Herman von Vittinghof, to enforce the demand. This roused the burghers once more: he had touched the sore part; and they were anxious now to do that for the preservation of their purses which they had neglected for the preservation of their freedom.

At this period a brave, honest, God-fearing old man, named Hermann Grein, was burgomaster of Cologne. He had long witnessed the degeneracy and degradation of his fellow-citizens, and the encroachments of the archbishop on their freedom and fortunes; but, being powerless in his own person to remedy the evil, he had interposed patience, until an opportunity should arise of throwing off the galling yoke. The patricians and plebeians were, by this act, once more united against the common foe; and private feuds were forgotten in the universal feeling of hatred caused by the manifold and vexatious oppressions of the archbishop. Plans were proposed and perfected for a general rising of the populace, and the expulsion of the ecclesiastical troops from the city: and a general rising took place accordingly, which ended in the triumph of the burghers and the overthrow of the archbishop's power.

Engelbert was outrageous at the news of this revolt; and swore roundly that he would subdue, or extirpate, the rebels.

To this end he summoned, without delay, all his feudatories; and, in a short time, found himself at the head of a numerous army. The Count of Gueldres, and his brother, the Bishop of Liege, both neighbours of Engelbert, also joined him with a considerable body of troops; but, as they had done so only in the hope of profit, without any notion of revenge or glory, they soon became spectators rather than actors in the drama, in consequence of the manifest determination of the burghers of Cologne to sacrifice their lives before they again gave up their liberties. It was happy for both parties that they did so. From being spectators, these princes soon assumed the character of mediators; and, by the intervention of their good offices, restored peace to the contending powers. The privileges of the city of Cologne were solemnly ratified by the archbishop; and the burghers renewed their oath of allegiance to that prelate, as their local suzerain.

Engelbert was, however, a man whom no vows could bind, and with whom no covenant was sacred, so long as it stood in the way of his ambitious schemes. What he could not effect by force he resolved to accomplish by fraud; and he again set on foot a plot by which to obtain the supremacy of the city. Under pretence of holding a high ecclesiastical court in Cologne, he repaired thither from Bonn, accompanied by a great number of followers wearing concealed arms and armour. His brother, the Count of Falkenberg, at the head of a large force of devoted retainers, smuggled into the city in small bodies of five or ten at the time, during the preceding day, only waited the signal of onset. His plan was to seize on the principal citizens, particularly the leaders of the opposition, while they attended the court. But it was discovered just in time to be effectually defeated. The citizens assembled in large numbers armed to the teeth; precautions were taken to prevent a junction of the Count of Falkenberg's detached followers; and the archbishop and his brother were surprised themselves in the toils they had set for others. Both were made prisoners by the triumphant burghers, and their followers once more expelled the city. Again were the good offices of the Count of Gueldres and the Bishop of Liege called into requisition as mediators; and again were they successful. Through their means Engelbert again ob-

tained his liberty ; but not before he had sworn, in the most solemn manner, to trouble the city no more. The ignominy of his defeat, however, preyed on him night and day ; and, as oaths were as little regarded by him, when they stood in his way, as ordinary promises, he was perpetually plotting against the peace and the liberty of the citizens. He was well aware, however, that so long as he had to deal with the brave, wise, old burgo-master, Hermann Grein, he should derive no advantage from his machinations. Him, therefore, he resolved to get rid of as soon as possible.

Hermann Grein was one of those extraordinary men, who seem as if expressly made for occasions of popular emergency. Brave, eloquent, honest, and liberal, he was the idol of the commonalty ; while his noble birth and princely qualities gave him high credit with the patrician portion of the community ; and his great wealth and extensive business as a merchant and trader, obtained him the confidence of the reputable burghers. He was, besides, prudent, discreet, and far-seeing ; and as much fitted as man could be by the suavity of his manners, the wisdom of his words, the blamelessness of his life, and the whole tenour of his thoughts and actions, to reconcile contending parties, and unite them against the common enemy of their freedom. On him was the ire of the archbishop now concentrated. The wary prelate knew right well, that while this old man lived his evil propensities would never be gratified ; in other words, that all attempts to regain his lost sway over the fair city of Cologne would be fruitless.

In the monastery contiguous to the cathedral were found fitting agents for the archbishop's purpose. Two canons of the foundation, who recommended themselves to him by their private hatred of Hermann Grein, were admitted to a knowledge of his diabolical design, and undertook to carry it into execution. In this monastery was a sort of rude museum, among the chief curiosities of which was an enormous lion, noted for his fierce, untameable nature. This fearful animal was intended by them for a principal actor in the terrible tragedy which they contemplated.

It was intimated to Hermann Grein, under the seal of secrecy, that the archbishop wished to treat with him privately

respecting his claims on the sovereignty of the city; and that he felt disposed to grant all that the citizens desired of his own free will, with the exception of a few trifling conditions. The emissaries of the archbishop on this occasion were the two canons. They further informed the burgomaster — finding him an attentive auditor — that their master would meet him in private in the monastery at any time he should think proper to name. After some consideration on the part of Hermann Grein, and much manœuvring on the part of the archbishop's emissaries, it was at last settled that the meeting should take place at dinner. They departed; and the burgomaster prepared to attend accordingly. He took, however, the precaution of confiding the whole affair to the chief members of the council; and, also, of arming himself to the teeth in the event of the worst. It was a noble sight to see that gallant old man, clothed in costly under-garments, a gold-velvet barret cap, from which flaunted a magnificent ostrich plume, on his gray head, a rich Spanish mantle flung over his shoulders, and his keen kurt Roman glaive by his side, go forth alone to face his foes, greeted by the smile of his friends, the reverence of his fellows, the gratulations of young and old of both sexes, and followed by the prayers and blessings of all. Thus accompanied, and thus only, he soon reached the precincts of the cathedral.

The ponderous portal of the monastery sprung wide to his first touch, and a handsome page, in the archbishop's livery, stood before him. He entered, the page preceding him; and, ascending the steps at the further end of the ample hall, soon stood in a suite of apartments on a level with the garden. Here he was received by the two canons, who had invited him thither, and managed the negotiation for the meeting.

“Welcome, most noble burgomaster,” spake they; “thrice welcome to these walls. All feud between the archbishop and the burghers is now at an end; and once more the city shall enjoy peace. Welcome, therefore, brave and noble burgomaster.”

“I thank ye, gentles,” replied the burgomaster; “freely I thank you for the cordiality of your welcome: and can assure you, that on my part nothing shall be left undone to promote that peace which none desires more than I do — always as-

suming it to be consistent with what we free citizens of Colognë consider our just rights and privileges. But where is my lord, the archbishop ?”

“ You are fond of the beauties of nature,” resumed one of the canons ; “ and so is his highness, too. We are but poor priests, as you wot, and have little to shew that a rich bürgher, whose traffic extends to the ends of the earth, may deem worthy to see. But yet there is a something yonder, in a corner of the garden of this house, which is well worth the looking at, more especially as our lord the archbishop is there admiring it also. Most noble burgomaster, would you while away the moments there, until our frugal meal is served up, in the company of his highness ?”

“ Most willingly,” answered Grein ; “ lead onwards.”

They entered a narrow winding passage, which looked into the garden ; Grein followed them unsuspectingly. They soon emerged into the garden itself. It was a lovely spot, furnished with all the known exotics of the period, and also with native flowers and fruits in the highest state of perfection. Short time was, however, allowed the burgomaster to admire them, for his conductors seemed impatient to bring him to the spot where he should find the prelate. They traversed the walks with rapid steps. A small door presented itself, bound with iron, and of uncommon thickness and strength.

“ Here, most noble burgomaster,” said the leader, “ is our private garden, into which none but those we prize the highest are admitted. Enter. You will find his highness at the further end. We may go no further ; for the spot is sacred to the heads of our house, and is not to be intruded on by any save the archbishop or his guests. Go in, and God speed ye.”

As this was said the door opened with a touch ; and, ere the hesitating burgomaster could reply, he found himself forced within it. The heavy crash of the shutting postern recalled him to a sense of his situation ; — and what a situation ! From the darkest corner of a narrow enclosure, bounded on all sides by high dead walls, beyond which was nothing to be seen save the unfinished tower of the cathedral, the earth covered with the skulls and bones of beasts, like the floor of a slaughter-house, gleamed forth like two lambent fires a pair of hideous eyes, and

resounded a terrific growl, like to the voice of distant thunder. In this spot stood Hermann Grein, his only companion a fierce lion; the only human sound he could hear, a mocking fiendish laugh from the traitors who had thus betrayed him to certain destruction.

"Now, most noble burgomaster," they scornfully shouted, "our archbishop is avenged. Call all your proud compeers as loud as you list, they cannot deliver you. Henceforth shall the city have peace, such as our holy church may permit of. — Ha! ha! ha!"

A moment's consideration sufficed for the brave old burgomaster — in another moment he was ready, for life or for death. Drawing his sword, he wrapped his mantle in thick folds round his left arm, to serve as a shield, and took his position in the angle opposite the raging animal. In a moment more the beast emerged slowly from his den.

"God prosper the right," prayed the old man; "if I fall, there are many more as good as me to watch over the freedom of this fair city."

He had scarce spoke the words when the furious beast, with a roar and a bound, was on him. He had, however, foreseen the direction which the animal would take, and, by leaping a little on one side, escaped the full force of the spring. But he could not escape a severe wound from the animal's claw, which, however, he returned with another in the brute's right side. And now the combat commenced in good earnest. The lion raised himself on his hind legs, and grasped the hapless burgomaster in his paws, as a cat would a mouse, while he attempted to swallow his head in the enormous mouth which gaped to receive it: but Grein defended himself desperately; and, while he thrust his arm, enveloped in the mantle as it was, down the monster's throat, he stabbed him in various parts of the sides and belly. This unequal battle lasted but a few minutes. Grein, by a fortunate thrust, succeeded in reaching the lion's heart, at the same moment that, exhausted from fatigue and loss of blood, he fell to the earth himself, beside his formidable adversary.

As he lay thus, he was recalled to life by the loud shouts of a raging crowd, and the deep boom of the alarm-bell of the city. Opening his eyes, he saw that the sun had sunk beneath

the horizon, and that it was late evening. A few minutes more awoke him to a recollection of the past ; and, making an altar of the dead lion's huge carcass, he prayed fervently to that Omnipotence which had vouchsafed his deliverance from such imminent and fearful peril. While thus occupied, the little wicket was forced open, and thousands of his friends and followers rushed into the narrow enclosure.

Suspecting that his long absence boded no good to him, or to the cause, his brothers of the council, in accordance with his advice, had made preparations to seek him. The rumour of his death got wind in the city, and thousands followed the troops sent to his rescue. When the traitorous canons saw them coming, they cunningly rushed forth to meet them, tearing their robes and crying aloud that the burgomaster had, by accident, gone into the den of the archbishop's lion, and had been there devoured by the animal. But the crowd gave no credit to their affected grief ; making use of them only to point out the spot where the brave old man was cast, as a prey to the raging beast.

A few words sufficed to tell the tale of their guilt, and of the burgomaster's escape ; and a few moments sufficed for their trial and condemnation. Short shrift was allowed them by the maddened mob ; and no respect was paid to their priestly condition by men who were honest enough to believe that the greater the enlightenment the greater the guilt. They were hung at once, in the clerical garb as they stood, at the gate of the monastery, since known, from that circumstance, as the " Priests' Gate." The struggles of death had not ceased, nor was consciousness even extinct, when the friends of Hermann Grein bore him past them, in a rude litter hastily constructed for the occasion ; crowned with laurel, covered with flowers, and accompanied with shouts of gratulation and triumph.

Such is the legend of the Lion Fight on the portico of the Rath Haus.

A word or two respecting the consequences that accrued from this act may not be misplaced here. The city of Cologne formally complained to the emperor of Germany, the brave and wise Rudolph von Hapsburgh, of this outrage ; and the archbishop was cited before the imperial tribunal to answer the

accusation. But he denied all participation in it; and, as there was no direct proof against him, by reason of the hasty execution of his accomplices, he was legally exculpated. Morally, however, he was not: for no one, not even the emperor himself, believed in his innocence. He never afterwards entered Cologne. Failing in various unsuccessful attempts to obtain the mastery of the city, principally by underhand means, he was again made prisoner, in a battle between the burghers and their allies, and his troops; and only liberated through the intercession of his ancient friend, Albertus Magnus. He died of mortified pride and disappointed ambition, A.D. 1275.

THE NEW MARCKT.

THE GRAY MARE IN THE GARRET.

In the portal of the Church of the Apostles, near the New Market in Cologne, hung a picture, the portraits of a certain Frau Richmodis von Aducht and her two children, of whom the following singular story is related. The picture was covered by a curtain which she worked with her own hands.*

Her husband, Richmuth von Aducht, was, in the year of grace 1400, a rich burgomaster of Cologne, and lived at the sign of the Parroquet in the New Marckt. In that year a fearful plague desolated all quarters of the city. She fell sick of the pest, and, to all appearance, died. After the usual period had elapsed, she was buried in the vaults of the Apostles' Church. She was buried, as the custom then was, with her jewelled rings on her fingers, and most of her rich ornaments on her person. These tempted the cupidity of the sexton of the church. He argued with himself that they were of no use to the corpse; and he determined to possess them. Accordingly, he proceeded in the dead of the night to the vault where she lay interred, and

* Already alluded to, *vide* "the Apostles' Church."

commenced the work of sacrilegious spoliation. He first unscrewed the coffin lid; he then removed it altogether, and proceeded to tear away the shroud which interposed between him and his prey. But what was his horror to perceive the corpse clasp her hands slowly together; then to rise; and, finally, to sit erect in the coffin. He was rooted to the earth. The corpse made as though it would step from its narrow bed. He fled, shrieking, through the vaults. The corpse followed, its long white shroud floating like a meteor in the dim light of the lamp which, in his haste, he had forgotten. It was not until he reached his own door that he had sufficient courage to look behind him; and then, when he perceived no trace of his pursuer, the excitement which had sustained him so far subsided, and he sank senseless to the earth.

In the meanwhile, Richmuth von Aducht, who had slept scarcely a moment since the death of his dear wife, was surprised by the voice of his old man-servant, who rapped loudly at his chamber-door, and told him to awake and come forth, for that his mistress had arisen from the dead, and was then at the gate of the court-yard.

"Bah! bah!" said he, rather pettishly; "go thy ways, Hans; you dream, or are mad, or drunk. What you say is quite impossible. I should as soon believe my old gray mare had got into the garret, as that my wife was at the court-yard gate."

"Trot, trot, trot, trot," suddenly resounded high over his head—"trot, trot, trot."

"What's that?" asked he of the servant.

"I know not," replied the man, "an' it be not your old gray mare in the garret."

They descended in haste to the court-yard, and looked up to the window of the attic. Lo, and behold! there was indeed the gray mare with her head poked out of the window, gazing down with her great eyes on her master and his man, and seeming to enjoy very much her exalted situation, and their surprise at it.

"Knock, knock, knock," went the rapper of the street-gate.

"It is my mistress! it is my wife!" exclaimed master and man in the same breath.

The door was quickly unfastened, and there, truly, stood the mistress of the mansion, enveloped in her shroud.

"Are you alive or dead?" exclaimed the astonished husband.

"Alive, my dear, but very cold," she murmured faintly, her teeth chattering the while, as those of one in a fever-chill; "help me to my chamber."

He caught her in his arms, and covered her with kisses; then he bore her to her chamber, and called up the whole house to welcome and assist her. She suffered a little from fatigue and fright; but, in a few days she was as well as could be expected under all the circumstances.

The thing became the talk of the town; and thousands flocked daily to see, not alone the lady that was rescued from the grave in so remarkable a manner, but also the gray mare who had so strangely contrived to get into the garret, and in so far contribute to that rescue.

This excellent lady lived long and happily with her husband; and, at her death, was laid once more in her old resting-place. The gray mare, after remaining in the garret for three days, was got down by means of machinery and an inclined plane, quite safe and sound. The interesting animal sometime survived her mistress, and grew to be a general favourite with the city. When she died, her skin was stuffed and placed in the arsenal as a curiosity. The sexton went mad with the fright he had sustained; and in a short time entered that bourn, from whence he had so unintentionally recovered the wife of the burgomaster.

Not alone was this memorable circumstance commemorated in the Church of the Apostles; but it was also commemorated in *bassi relievi* figures on the walls of their residence—the sign of the Parroquet in the New Marckt. The searcher after antiquities will, however, look in vain for either; they are not now to be found. Modern taste has defaced the porch where stood the one, and erected a shapeless structure on the site of the other. *Sic transit gloria mundi.*

And now, farewell Cologne! Proceed we up the river on our pleasant pilgrimage; yet, ere we go, let us pass for a moment to the suburb of that city—Deutz. We cross by the

bridge of boats—that rude substitute for the Roman arches which rose to span this mighty stream in the time of Constantine the Great.

DEUTZ.

Deutz, Duitsch, Duitz, or Tuitsch—for by all these appellatives is it known—lies opposite Cologne, on the other side of the river. It is supposed by some to derive its name from a castle and bridge built there by the Emperor Constantine, the former of which was garrisoned by the legion called *Duitenses*; others, on the contrary, deduce its etymology from the Teutones, or the Tuisi, a Cimbrian people who occupied the shores of the Rhine anterior to the Roman dominion of Germany; while a third party derives it from a prince of those people, Tuisko, who had his dwelling there ages before the invasion of that powerful people.

Of Deutz, as it stands, little may be said here. It is the resort of the inhabitants of Cologne on Sundays and fête-days, and has, no doubt, an abundance of accommodation for all the purposes of their enjoyment. The bridge of boats which leads to it, forms one of the pleasantest promenades in the vicinity of the city: and is, at certain times of the day, a most delightful place on which to pass an hour or two.

THE MIDDLE AGES.

Before proceeding further, it may not be unamusing, or altogether uninformative, while, at the same time, it will be essentially requisite for the better understanding of all that follows, to take a rapid glance at the state of society on the Rhine in the Middle Ages. The greater part of the subjects treated of in the subsequent pages, are connected with that period; and almost all the striking traditions to be found in this work take

their rise from the unsettled circumstances of that time, and the singular social condition of the people. The era chosen, as the best calculated to exemplify this state of society, is the interregnum, which virtually took place on the essential extinction of the Hohenstanfen imperial family, in the person of Frederic the Second, A.D. 1250; and was only terminated by the election of Rudolph von Hapsburg, A.D. 1273. Conrad the Fourth, the son and successor of Frederic, was driven from the empire by Adolph, count of Holland, who usurped the throne. He ended his life in Italy. The latter, in his turn, was ingloriously slain in a campaign against the Frisons, undertaken without cause, and conducted without skill or success. Two foreign princes then sought the imperial dignity; the one, Alphonso the Wise, king of Castile, the most learned man of his time, but whose learning was insufficient to extinguish the cravings of a vain ambition; the other, Richard, earl of Cornwall, brother to Henry the Third, king of England, then accounted the richest subject in Europe. Both were chosen, contemporaneously, by the needy princes, who possessed the power of election; but the former never once came near Germany in his lifetime, while the latter visited it briefly only on three or four occasions. Conradin, the son of Conrad the Fourth, made an effort to recover the empire and the kingdom of Italy; but he was defeated and made prisoner in an attempt upon the Island of Sicily, and beheaded at Naples by order of Charles of Anjou, A.D. 1268. It is of this era, so fertile in all the elements of future change, that mention is most frequently made in the following observations.

The sorrowful end of the Hohenstanfen family, served as a signal for the general dismemberment of the German empire. With them fell the ancient form of government founded by Charlemagne, never more to be restored. Many circumstances paved the way to this consummation; and to those who look on it philosophically, it does not appear a matter of much wonder. The diocesses on the Rhine possessed, by the concordat of Henry the Fifth, dating a century and a half before, the power of electing their own bishops; the temporal sovereignty of their respective sees had been conceded to them by Frederic the Second. The untimely death of Conradin caused a vacancy

in the two greatest principalities on that river, Franconia and Swabia, and left them a prey to their spiritual and temporal neighbours. Finally, the imperial power and the imperial insignia had become but play-things, or sources of profit, in the hands of the Rhenish electors, who violated the laws at their pleasure, disposed of the crown to suit their private purposes, and sold not alone the first dignities of the empire, but even the empire itself, to the highest bidder. Henry of Thuringia, William of Holland, Richard of Cornwall, Alphonso of Castile, Adolph of Nassau, Albert of Austria, Ludwig of Bavaria, Frederic of Austria, Gunther of Schwartzburg, Charles of Luxemburg, Wenceslaus of Bohemia, and Rupert the Prince Palatine, were successively elected by them, and successively deposed. But each election was stained with some of the best blood of the empire.

In this hapless state of things, the "Great Interregnum," as it is always termed by the German historians, occurred, plunging all classes into one common condition of terror, tribulation, and dismay; overthrowing every thing considered fixed and stable; confounding right and wrong; and totally severing the bonds which held society together. The ancient institutions of the empire still existed, it is true, but they existed only in theory. There were still the names of emperor, imperial diet, province, and jurisdiction; but they were names and no more. The empire was, in fact, split into a hundred fragments: each under its own independent prince; governed by its own code of laws; and owning no real fealty to the powerless head of the general state. The social history of the Rhine at this period forms, perhaps, one of the most remarkable pages in the history of the world. At the same time, and in close contact, were to be found, each in the most flourishing condition, the most opposite and anomalous forms of civil government. Spiritual and temporal despotism; monarchical and republican institutions; imperial power and individual independence, were visible on each shore in juxtaposition; exhibiting themselves in the strongest possible contrast, and yet amalgamating into the most complete general harmony. In the cities were to be seen common mechanics united into distinct trades or guilds, acquiring, by union and conduct, a sufficient degree of importance to

contend successfully with their magistracy. These, again, were to be found at perpetual feud with their bishops, who also exercised the powers of temporal princes; while the latter were never at peace with the emperor or with the pope, but were always contending for rights or privileges with the one or with the other. The German empire, at this era, comprehended the great principalities; the principalities contained the knight-feus and the civic communities; while the latter included the corporations of trades and the commonalty. By this means they were all so mixed up together, and, at the same time, so separate and distinct from each other, that every party was assured of their independence, or had the means of affirming it afforded them.

Amidst this general confusion, however, a series of republics sprang up on the shores of the Rhine, which, in the wisdom of their peculiar form of government, in the felicity of their institutions, considered in connexion with the time and the circumstances under which they were established, and in their wealth and intellectual cultivation, may bear to be classed with the best of their kind among the ancient Greeks and Romans: while, at the same time, flourished beside them in proud luxuriance, counties which possessed the power of independent principalities, and principalities which surpassed kingdoms in might, and opulence, and grandeur. In the midst of cunning priests and ambitious demagogues, were to be found patriots whose high deeds, meriting apotheosis even in modern times, would have raised them to the ranks of heroes and demigods in the days of antiquity; and philosophers, whose wisdom would have ennobled, and whose learning would have exalted any state or era in which they lived. Close beside the free republics of the cities and the towns, the iron-handed knights of that period planted their impregnable castles: on the boundaries of the cloister's domain might be met the lordship of a count; and, contiguous to the spirituality of a prelate was situated the temporal dominion of a prince. Here, in the stately cities, rose the flaming pyre for the punishment of heretics and witches—of all who denied the supremacy, or questioned the purity, of the Church of Rome; beside it were hospitals for the sick, and places of refuge for the poor, and weary, and afflicted. Without their walls, rugged barons and robber-knights ravaged

the land, destroyed the crops, and ruined and burned villages and houses undefended from their barbarous rage: within them, peaceful artisans plied their respective occupations in comfort and security; whilst wealthy merchants and active traders extended their views and carried their traffic into the remotest parts of the country. And, while priests and monks preached the most intolerant doctrines on the one hand, the consequences of commerce and intercourse—knowledge and enlightenment—produced a beneficial counteracting influence on the other. The sword of the prince, and the pastoral staff of the prelate, were wielded often by the same hand; between the rows of fanatic flagellants glided the fair forms of youth in the joyous dance; and, among the sullen echoes of the choral chant in the monastic solitudes of the cloister, ever and anon were heard the tender songs of the Minnesänger,—those love-lorn and gentle effusions of the Teutonic troubadours.

Domestic life, at this era, was not less various in its shades and gradations of moral hue, or less manifold in its obvious forms, than was that of the public. True love, as it was once known, existed no longer between the sexes. Gallantry, and vain and idle ceremonials, altogether usurped its place. Prudent housekeeping was heard of only among the very aged; idleness and plundering took the lead of active industry among the mass of the population. All the elements of society were in a state of discordance. Knightly tournaments, before the delight of the age, were now superseded by silly public buffoonery, and mummeries of the same cast and character; and the beautiful romantic traditions of ancient days were entirely expelled the minds of men by obscene tales and barbarous bacchanalian chants. Uproar and confusion every where was; each man's hand was raised against his neighbour, and his neighbour's against him. The whole state, in its social condition, was disorganised—the times were out of joint. The only bond of union which existed between those elements of strife and opposition was the Christian religion; and that was, perhaps, upheld alone by its connexion with the interests of the existing forms of government.

The spirit of this period is nowhere more distinctly perceived than in its public edifices, especially in its ecclesiastical

ones. Those towers which lift their heads to heaven — those splendid cathedrals, with their thousands of pillars and pilasters, their “long drawn aisles and fretted vaults,” their stupendous portals, their painted windows, their gorgeous ornaments, their massive buttresses, their magnificent spires, their countless statues, their noble monuments — themselves the noblest of all — tell the tale of greatness and superstition in a manner not to be misunderstood. This era appears as though it were the beginning of a time in which the human mind was undergoing a state of transition from ordinary mortality to that sublimation which produces heroism and all its concomitants, grandeur and power. To form an accurate idea of its condition, the best comparison that can be instituted is to be found in the history of the heroic period of Greece. The greatness and glory, as well as the baseness and cruelty of the ancient heroes, may be fully paralleled on the shores of the Rhine in the Middle Ages.

The history of the Saxon, Salique, Franconian, and Swabian dynasties, is but a tissue of deadly struggles between the imperial power and the growing might of the princes and great barons, feudatories of the empire. By the original constitution of the German monarchy under Charlemagne, these princes were placed as governors of provinces only; and their possessions were held *in capite*, by a sort of feudal tenure directly from the sovereign, who had always a clear right of resumption. In process of time, however, partly through the weakness of the sovereigns, partly through the extension of their own power, and partly by means of additional privileges conferred on them for services performed in moments of emergency, these princes gradually emancipated themselves from the actual dominion of the emperors, and, finally, became independent in all things but the name. To check this growing evil, a counterpoise was set up against them in the shape of the church. Large estates were bestowed upon the clergy; monasteries were endowed with baronial, and even regal privileges; and the bishops were empowered to take the style and title, and act in every respect, as lay princes. By this means an effectual check was put, for a time, on the temporal chiefs inferior to the sovereign. But it was one which subsequently became as onerous to the sovereign himself as it was then to the dukes and great barons of the empire. As the

latter, in their desire to increase their possessions, and transmit them to their posterity, stood on no scruples, incursions were often made by them on the possessions of their neighbours, whether lay or clerical, whenever they had the power to do so, with impunity: so the former, finding the thunders of the church to be unavailing against these predatory inroads, had recourse to the sword in their own defence. The weak race of emperors, who filled the throne had no power to protect them; and they were, consequently, compelled to fall back on their own resources. They speedily built strong castles, and set on foot regular bodies of armed retainers to garrison them; and, in the lapse of a very short period, they became as formidable a foe to the emperor as ever a temporal prince in the entire country.

From the time of the downfall of the Hohenstanfen family, all traces of the ancient institutions of the German people seem to have been obliterated, and no remnant appears to have been left of them in their civil polity, to tell even that they once existed. Instead of the former divisions of the land, named after rivers, or mountains, or plains—after some natural peculiarity of the face of the country—there were no divisions now save what took their title from the names of the respective families to which it had, as it were, become parcelled out, by the process of conquest or fraudulent acquisition. There were no longer assemblages of the powers of the empire in *Champ de Mai*, as heretofore; the election of an emperor was now only a solemn farce, which partook of freedom scarcely in the name, but knew not of it even in the semblance. It would serve no purpose to enter on the minute subdivisions of honours, and power, and property, which followed; inasmuch as to treat of such manifold subjects with ordinary justice would require labour of a life, and the space of several volumes: equally purposeless would it be to enter into any thing like a detailed history of the various changes which took place, not alone in the relations of these petty princes to one another, but to the empire, for the same reasons. A rapid sketch of the episcopal and civil power, on the Rhine, its origin, and its progress, will be found, however, absolutely necessary here.

In the early ages of the ecclesiastical condition, according to the custom of the church, a bishop was set over every

diocess for the cure of souls, as well as for the supervision of the clergy under him. He was generally elected by his congregation; but, in the course of time, the inferior clergy assumed that power to themselves, on its lapse by the general community. The kings and emperors of the Frankish monarchy made rich presents to the church, and endowed the foundations erected by them with large possessions; through a wise policy, perhaps, which pointed out to them that their power received its greatest accession of strength from a union with the popular religion, as much as from a weak-minded bigotry, or ignorant zealousness. The consequence of this liberality, however, was that they occasionally interfered, silently, but effectually, in the election of bishops, by recommending to the electoral body of the clergy their own partisans. However ascetic may be a man's education, or however pure may be the motives to his actions, he will always be influenced by the general feelings of human nature. The sovereigns were the benefactors of the church: the clergy had no community of interests—no sympathies—no identity of views—with the mass of the population of their respective diocesses. Thus, when the emperor proposed a prelate, they ever argued that it would be ingratitude to refuse him. The recollection of past favours, perhaps, less than the anticipation of future ones, usually influenced their choice: the emperors perceiving the facility with which they could manage the church, practised as often as possible the same arts by which they had before succeeded, in elevating to power a devoted partisan; and so, by little and little, that which had been at first conceded as a favour, was at length claimed and exercised by them as an inherent right. This claim was the cause of many serious and even sanguinary quarrels between the state and the church, of which mention shall be made more at large in a future portion of this work.

Among the Rhenish sees there were three archbishoprics, or metropolitan churches, which claimed and exercised ecclesiastical authority over a wide extent of country, as well in France as in Germany. These were Triers or Treves, Mainz, and Cologne. The archbishop of Triers had spiritual authority over nearly one half the German empire, inclusive of the Dutchy of Lorraine; the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Mainz.

was recognised in a very large portion of the French territory ; and the Archbishop of Cologne was generally accounted the second prelate of Christendom, taking station immediately after the Pope, and preceding all others in rank and power. Their temporal condition was fully equal to their spiritual : they were princes, independent, in all save the name, of the emperor ; they were electors, and had the nomination to the empire in their own hands. With such power and adequate riches, it is not at all surprising that, from the earliest periods, the possession of these dignities was emulously sought after by all classes ; or, that even the sons of princes should have strove to exchange the sword of the warrior, or the sceptre of nominal rule, for the mighty crozier of the Rhenish prelate. It was so. Accordingly we find, in the lapse of time, that most of the high offices in the church were filled with the children of the ancient nobility of the land, or with the sons of neighbouring sovereigns ; while, in a long succession of bishops, there is scarcely to be discovered a single name unallied to either.

Though unquestionably of some advantage to religion at the outset, this influx of birth and breeding ultimately brought about its utter ruin. The bishops, become temporal princes, occupied themselves more with civil and military affairs than those which they were ostensibly supposed to be exclusively charged with : the canons and chief clergy led a secular life, attending almost entirely to worldly business, and only visiting their churches and discharging their ecclesiastical duties, on state occasions, or in times of high holiday ; while the inferior clergy, on whom all the important functions of the ecclesiastical condition were now devolved, seduced by the example of those above them, gave way to indolence, neglect, and, in many cases, profligacy of morals, and, pursuing pleasure or personal gratification alone, left the mass of the population, whom it was their duty to instruct by word and deed, in a state of the most deplorable ignorance and barbarism. So much for the church.

In the civic communities, however, which then crowded the shores of the Rhine, there was much more activity and far more enlightenment. The great cities had, in the course of ages, made themselves virtually independent of their nominal sovereigns, and affected to hold their privileges directly from the empire,

rather than immediately from their respective princes. The social condition within their walls was widely different from that which existed without them. The population was subdivided into guilds, or corporations, by whom were chosen the magistracy, which generally consisted of a chief, or burgermeister, and a council. Each guild, or corporation, had its own chief besides, who exercised over its members the magisterial power, and whose authority, in many cases, superseded that of the burgermeister of the city. Trade and commerce occupied the inhabitants; and, while they gave them the means of enlightenment and luxury, gave them also a spirit of turbulence too seldom repressed, and which often times proved fatal to life and fortune, and their best interests.

Between these petty republics and the great temporal and ecclesiastical principalities, lay, thickly planted along the shores of the stream, on every commanding position, the castles of the inferior nobility and of the knights; each of whom threatened or protected his own little patch of territory, asserted or enforced his own little claim for toll, or exemption, on passengers up and down the river, or made predatory incursions upon his neighbours' lands or forays upon the rich traders who, in those days, traversed that great highway of central Europe to find markets for their manufactures and other commodities. But, though exercising independent powers in fact, they were always in the nominal service, and under the real protection, of some one or other of the temporal or spiritual sovereigns in their vicinity, who tolerated their lawless deeds because of their occasional utility to them in warfare against their own subjects, or their external opponents. The influence of circumstances, however, often placed these petty chieftains in the position of antagonists, sometimes even of masters to the princes whom they professed to serve: and the local historians of this period point out the names of Seckingen, Kronberg, and Dahlberg, as among those who made not alone their sovereigns sue to them for peace, but likewise struck terror into the hearts of the still more powerful, and still more intractable burghers of the towns and cities on the Rhine.

In the midst, however, of all this social commotion, the influence of the Christian faith still retained much of its primi-

tive sway, and beautified while it bettered the condition of its professors. From the thick tumult of the battle-field, and from the dark cell of the cloister, were heard at intervals the voice of song ; and, among the iron-handed warriors, as well as among the cowed and shaven monks, were occasionally to be found men who did honour to human nature. It is true that fierce ambition often distained the steps of the altar with blood, and defiled the episcopal throne with the grossest impiety ; and equally true it is, that a rude and formless superstition sat like an incubus on the minds of the great mass of the people : but these evils were not sufficient to stifle altogether the spirit of universal brotherhood, and general benevolence, which the faith of Christ had diffused through the land ; though it must be owned they went very far to effect it. The warlike Germans of the early ages made temples to their gods in the groves and the thickets : the warlike Germans of the middle ages sensualised the doctrine of the Gospel into a worship of saints ; and, instead of a Pantheon, or Walhallas, erected a Gothic cathedral.

The religion of this era consisted almost entirely in reverence of the saints. Every kingdom, every principality, every city and town, every guild and trade, and combination of men, nay, even every individual, had his own peculiar patron in the calendar. There was not a cathedral, yea, there was not a single chapel on the Rhine, or in its neighbourhood, which had not some treasure, in the shape of relics, deposited in its sacristy, to be shewn to the public but on days of high holiday. These remains were generally incased in shrines of the richest materials, and the costliest workmanship ; and the value of millions was locked up in them in the treasuries of the cathedrals of Cologne, Mainz, and Triers alone.

In the same degree that the popular teachers taught the common people to revere, and almost worship, those worthy men who bore the title of saints, and imitate their actions, especially their munificence to the church, so did they teach them, on the contrary, to hate and detest those who acted otherwise, and to fear the fate reserved for them. The horrors of the heathen Hades, as portrayed by the classic poets of antiquity, were nothing to those devised by the fervid imaginations of the clergy of this era for sinful Christians. Dante's "Inferno" is

the best commentary extant on the hell of the middle ages. Holy Writ makes a positive enjoyment of the presence of God the heaven of the just; and the absence of that enjoyment is pointed out as the severest punishment of the wicked—the hell of the Scriptures. At the worst, the positive pain of perpetual fire is superadded to the passive torments of an eternal privation of God's presence. But the uncurbed fancy of the middle ages heaped physical horror upon horror, and made fearful mortal agonies the inheritance of the spirit which passed away in the bonds of sin, or under the ban of the church. Thus it is that the sublimity of the Christian belief in a state of future rewards and punishments, in the early ages of the Gospel, was clouded and overcast; was rendered, in short, foolish and ridiculous by the fanatical ignorance of succeeding generations. The damned souls of the middle ages were, according to the popular creed, subjected to the most manifold torments—roasting, broiling, baking; twisting, tearing, wrenching from limb to limb; seething in lakes of liquid sulphur and boiling bitumen; freezing on plains of ice and snow, without covering or shelter: to every pain, in short, which the sanguinary disposition of the time could suggest to the unregulated imagination of ignorant enthusiasm, or interested zeal. To inflict such a multiplicity of punishments, a multiplicity of agents was necessary; and, accordingly, several distinct classes of fiends and demons were created by the same fevered fancy. Thus it came to pass in the course of time that a portion of the ancient mythos, long forgotten except by the learned, was once more revived as a feature in popular belief; and the woods, the groves, the rocks, the valleys, the caves, the rills, the fountains, the streams, yea, even the towns, and cities, and public structures, once tenanted by fauns and dryads, nymphs and nereids, patrons and penates, were now peopled in the public mind by ghosts and phantoms, kobolds and fairies, guardian angels, protecting and avenging spirits, lurleys and water kings, wood spirits and demons of the waste, wild hunters and white ladies, malicious and merry devils, gnomes and gray men—in brief, by the whole host of fantastical beings who fill such an important place, and perform such various functions in the popular mythology of the Germans, and in the legendary portion of the following pages.

To the tender mercies of these agents were consigned, by the general belief, all tyrant princes, great and small, who oppressed their people ; all priests and prelates who led wanton, and dissolute, and godless lives ; all misers who concealed their treasures ; all profligates who mispent them ; all land-meters who robbed the poor man of his portion of the soil ; all judges who judged unrighteously. The forests, the plains, the river-shore, the mountains, the cities themselves,

“ The busy haunts of men,”

were thronged with their unearthly victims. Night was generally the time selected for their punishment ; and many a fearful story is told of its infliction, in the legends of the Rhenish land. Mainz, to this day, has its fiery chariot, in the fancy of the populace ; Triers, its phantom of Nicius Varus, the Roman prætor ; Rodenstein, and his ghastly host, occupy the Bergstrasse ; and the wild hunter, and his hellish hounds, still frighten the belated peasant of the Odenwald.

The empire of superstition was not, however, confined to the spirits of another world. The beings of this, believed to be in communion with them, were denounced as enemies of society, and persecuted with the relentless fury of ignorance, under the then fearful name of witches and wizards. In the course of time, Jews and heretics were confounded with them. Finally, every creed not the popular one, was pronounced to be the offspring of the powers of darkness ; and its professors were deemed worthy of the punishments heretofore reserved alone for the damned. Thus arose the custom of burning Jews and heretics.

In proportion as this superstition increased, the public mind was plunged into the most deplorable state of ignorance and barbarism. Storms and sickness were held to be special interpositions of Providence for the visible punishment of some concealed offence against the church, or the state, or even the petty territorial seigneur ; comets were looked on as harbingers of evil to the human race ; eclipses were regarded as ominous to the rulers of the land,

“ With fear of change,
Perplexing monarchs ;”

and every extraordinary appearance in the atmosphere was looked on as a predication of "war, and rumours of war," in the world. At this period, too, particular diseases made their appearance in a manner then strange enough; but now perfectly natural to all versed in physical science. Among the most singular of these was the celebrated sickness, known as St. Vitus's dance. In the middle of the thirteenth century, a crowd of persons, purporting to be afflicted with this disease, and denominated from thence, the St. Vitus's dancers, collected together on the shores of the Rhine and the Moselle, and performed the most extraordinary antics ever before witnessed. They placed themselves in rows opposite each other on the roads, in the streets, all over the town, and then commenced their melancholy saltation. They crossed and recrossed; hopped now on one leg, now on another; anon they sprang into the air, and then they spun about like an opera dancer in a pirouette; until, finally, exhausted with illness and exertion, the excitement of the moment past, their strength gone, their spirits fled, they fell to the earth senseless and without motion. On their recovery they generally ranged themselves at the church doors, and compelled alms from the pious or the timid who frequented these places of worship. At Cologne their number amounted to about three hundred. It is not to be doubted that, though the disease known as St. Vitus's dance was the primary cause of these assemblages, idleness and a desire to lead a wanton life, conduced much to keep them up subsequently. A cotemporary writer states, that at one time there were upwards of three hundred women illegitimately pregnant among them.*

To appease the divine wrath, which the popular faith held to be the immediate cause of these afflictions, pilgrimages were invented by the priests, and eagerly adopted by the multitude. But the evil was only changed in form; in substance it was still the same. The St. Vitus's dancers were superseded by the Flagellants, who went from city to city, flogging themselves in public, but committing every excess in private; and a gang of sturdy beggars styled the "Hopping Holy Ones," overspread

* The compiler of the Limburg Chronicle.

the land, levying contributions, in the name of the Most High, upon all classes, and contaminating the morals of every portion of the community by their conjunct hypocrisy and profligate demeanour.

It was, however, in the thick of this strange jumble of all the elements of social order, that two events occurred which laid the foundation of the highest degree of future civilisation : these were the crusades, especially the second crusade, which was preached in Germany by St. Bernard of Clairvaux ; and the confederation of the Rhine, by which the petty chiefs who had so long obstructed that noble stream and harrassed travellers on it, was annihilated, and their robber-nests, in many instances, destroyed. Something also may be ascribed to the operations of the *Vehmgerichte*, or celebrated secret tribunal, said to have been first established in Germany by Engelbert the Holy, archbishop of Cologne, though some antiquaries ascribe it to Charlemagne :—a power which, working in secret, striking its victims unseen, and thus setting all calculations of its effects at defiance, exercised a most salutary influence over all classes of the community. As, however, these several subjects will necessarily come to be treated of more at large hereafter, it is deemed sufficient merely to mention them here. The Hanse Towns Confederacy which ensued soon after, put the coping-stone on the fabric of Rhenish wealth, and power, and civilisation. It were to be wished that as much could be said for the Reformation.

We now pass up the river.

ALTE BURG.

THE KOBOLD.*

Within a few minutes' walk of the Bayenthurm, which forms the furthestmost extremity of Cologne, as the traveller proceeds up the Rhine, stand a large mill and an adjacent house, on the bank of the river. History or tradition mentions nothing of their origin or antiquity; and yet that the spot must be the site of a very ancient structure, is evident from the derivation of its name — Alte Burg — literally, old castle. It is not, how-

* That the Kobold is in every respect identical with the domestic spirit, the "Goblin" alluded to by Milton in the following lines, the sequel of this story will satisfactorily shew.

"How the drudging goblin sweat
To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
When in one night ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail hath threshed the corn,
That ten day-labourers could not end;
Then lies him down the lubber fiend,
And, stretched out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength;
And crop full out at door he flings,
Ere the first cock his matin rings."

L'Allegro.

Shakspeare has unequivocally designated him in his frolic spirit Puck, though there seems to be some anomaly between his and the preceding description.

"Are you not he
That fright the maidens of the villagery;
Skim milk; and sometimes labour in the quern,
And bootless make the breathless housewife churn;
And sometimes make the drink to bear no barm,
Mislead night wanderers, laughing at their harm?"

Midsummer Night's Dream, Act 2, Scene 1.

Those who are versed in Scottish Demonology, will at once recognise the well-known "Brownie" of that country, in the German Kobold; and a reference to that most entertaining work, "Fairy Legends of the South of Ireland," will immediately establish his identity with the "Fir Darrig" of my old friend, Crofton Croker.

ever, of their origin or antiquity that we are now about to treat ; but of a domestic superstition connected with them, and of which the mill is said to have been the scene.

It is not half a century since, that one summer night late, two students from Bonn, who, tempted by the beauty of the early part of the evening and latter part of the day, had agreed to stroll along the river shore to Cologne, rapped loudly at the mill-door of Alte Burg to obtain shelter. A terrific storm of wind and rain, and thunder and lightning, had all of a sudden burst on them : and the wild waters foamed and roared, lashed by the fierce tempest, threatening every moment to engulph the soil they traversed. Not a star was to be seen in the sky ; not a light was visible in their vicinity, save that which glimmered in the uppermost window of the mill ; all nature appeared given up as a prey to the infuriated demons of destruction. Although within a short distance of their journey's end, they dared not venture beyond the spot on which they stood, for the fury of the elements and the fear of being swallowed up by the raging river.

“ Hilloa ! house—within ; hilloa, hilloa ! ”

Thus they shouted, knocking at the same time as loudly as they could. For a time they received no answer. At length they saw the light move and then leave the casement ; and, shortly after, they heard footsteps approaching the door.

“ What would ye ? ” spake a gruff voice from within. “ What brawling be this so late i' the night ? ”

“ Shelter from the storm,” exclaimed both in the same breath. “ Open, for God's sake, open ! Let us not tarry here longer.”

“ Ay, ay ! ” answered the surly interrogator : “ ready enough ye be to ask when ye want, I'll warrant me. But, bide a bit. A dog were too ill-served to lie without to-night. Ye shall have shelter.”

With much deliberation the fastenings of the door were undone, slowly and mechanically, one after the other ; and an ill-looking, hard-featured old man admitted the drenched youths to the interior of the mill.

“ And now, father,” spake the senior of the two, “ we are hungry, and would fain have to eat. What can you give us ? ”

“Naught,” replied the surly miller; “I have given ye enough. Ye have had shelter; what would ye more?”

It was in vain that they endeavoured to move the flinty heart of the old curmudgeon; food would he give them none: and when they pressed him too hard on the subject, he even threatened to turn them both out of doors again. As they argued with him, however, the younger espied a small table in a recess of the spacious, dimly lighted apartment in which their conference was held, covered with a clean cloth and furnished with a homely bowl, containing plain, substantial food. Beside it stood a goodly sized can, brimming over with the best black beer. He pointed it out to his comrade, and as he did so he again addressed their inhospitable host.

“Nay now, father, here is meat in abundance, and plenty of brisk beer too: why may we not partake of them?”

“An ye will,” replied the miller; “but I warn ye not.”

“And why?” asked the senior student.

“Because they be set there for the Kobold; now, have them an ye choose.”

The Kobold was a name of fear to the young men, for they were well acquainted with all the propensities which legend or tradition had assigned him; so they said no more on the subject, but asked their host to shew them to bed.

“Ye may sleep where ye sit,” growled the surly ancient. “Good enough, too, for trampers,” he muttered between his teeth.

“But the Kobold!” exclaimed both.

“Nay, an ye meddle not with him or his, he will meddle not with ye,” replied he. “So, good sleep to ye; I must to my bed. Go ye to your board; and, hark ye! if ye hear aught in the night, heed it not. ’Twill be but the house spirit taking his meal.”

He left the mill as he spoke, locking the door by which he retired to his own house after him; and the two youths were now left alone in the dim chamber, with no fire, and scarce an inch of candle. Youth and health generally woo to sleep under the most unfavourable circumstances; and fatigue, superadded to the influence of both, makes the impulse to rest almost irresistible. But there was a still more powerful influence at work

on these boys; that was the influence of hunger. They had eaten nothing since the mid-day meal of which they partook in Bonn; and the air and exercise which they had subsequently taken contributed not at all to deaden their appetite for supper.

"Nay, brother," spake the younger, "come what will, I shall fare off that food to-night. I cannot sleep for hunger."

"I beseech ye not to touch it," eagerly interposed the elder, who was a magister (M.A.), and knew all about these matters. "I beseech ye not to touch it, brother, at all. What is destined for the fiend, that let him have; but meddle not with aught which belongs to him, as ye value life and limb."

Once more the youths wooed sleep, but still in vain: it fled their eye-lids. The younger tossed and tumbled, as though he lay upon a *chevaux de frise*.

"I care not, brother," he spake again; "I care not what comes of it: I must eat! Be it for God, or be it for devil, I shall share it with him!"

"I beseech ye once more, my brother, do not touch that food," spake the senior. "The vengeance of the Kobold is fearful. Know ye not what happ'd to the Bishop of Hildesheim's kitchen-boy? 'Twas terrible!"

"No!" replied the startled youth, his fear for a moment superseding his hunger. "What?"

"I'll tell you," proceeded his companion.

"This Kobold, who was commonly known by the name of Hoddeken, lived a great deal in the bishop's kitchen, and was, on the whole, rather a favourite than otherwise with the domestics of the episcopal palace. He would always wear a large straw hat on his head, but drawn so deep over his eyes that no one was ever known to have seen his face. Hence his name of Hutchen, or Hoddeken, in the vulgar dialect. An empty bin in the cellar was his bed-chamber, and some foul straw composed his bed. He lived on the run of the kitchen, and was very serviceable on occasions to the menials of the establishment. But the cook did not much like him, for what reason it boots not to know; and the kitchen-boy, following the example by his superior, occasionally gave him great annoyance. Not content with bestowing abusive words on him, this temerarious lad was

wont now and then to fling scaldings over him, and then laugh at his natural irritation. One day, the boy drenched him from head to foot with the water in which the dishes of the bishop's banquet had been just washed. Hoddeken, highly excited at this unworthy treatment, went to the cook and made a complaint of it, praying, at the same time, that the youth might be properly punished. The cook, however, who enjoyed the joke very much himself, only laughed at him too; and, in a sneering manner, taunted him with being afraid of a boy, though he professed to be a powerful spirit.

"Nay, an' ye will not punish him as ye should," said Hoddeken, turning away as he spoke; "I shall even do it as I may. In a few days ye shall see whether I fear him or not."

He was evidently much enraged at the circumstance; for he was not seen in the kitchen for the remainder of the week.

The occurrence was very speedily forgotten by all parties but the spirit; he, fiendlike, lay in wait for the hour of his vengeance. It shortly arrived. About seven days after this scene had occurred, the kitchen-boy slept beside the fire one night, long after the cook and the other domestics of the palace had retired to rest. He slept soundly, for he had, besides an extra allowance of beer obtained by some means in the course of the day, also drank the foaming can of that liquor which had been nightly set for the spirit by the bishop's particular order.

"How thirsty I am," interposed the younger of the two students, smacking his lips as the word "beer" was mentioned, and the state of his stomach thus brought back to his own recollection; "and hungry, too."

"Well," continued the narrator, "as I was saying, the boy slept like a top before the fire, snoring aloud, when who should steal into the kitchen on tip-toe but Hoddeken. He had all along watched and waited for this opportunity; and now he availed himself of it without a moment's delay. Seizing the cook's great knife, which lay on the table, he drew it across the throat of the sleeping youngster, and severed his head sheer from his body. He next proceeded to dissect the corpse,

making use of the cook's cleaver to separate the gristles; and, having effected this, he collected all the parts, and flung them, together with the mutilated trunk, into the great cauldron, which seethed over the fire, to be in readiness for the soup of the morning's meal. He then retired to his den in the cellar."

"Oh! that was dreadful!" groaned the younger student, hiding his face in his hands, and shrinking, as it were, within himself. "Dreadful! dreadful!"

"Next morning," continued the storyteller, "he appeared in the kitchen as usual. When the cook proceeded to dispense the breakfast, and uncovered the cauldron for the purpose of ladling out its contents, such a deadly odour reeked forth from its vast womb as made him faint with sickness. It filled the whole palace: no one could partake of the soup. When the cauldron was almost emptied, the head and trunk of the kitchen-boy were found boiled down to a white skull, and a bleached skeleton; the other bones were also discovered at the bottom of the vessel. As they removed these relics to a place more fitted for them than the kitchen scullery, Hoddeken exulted in the deed, and disappeared at the same moment. From that hour, until he was laid in the Red Sea by the exorcisms of the bishop and the Abbot of Fulda, under a special power from the Pope himself, he turned every thing upside down in the palace, and made the lives of all, from the master to the lowest menial, almost unendurable. That is what happened to the kitchen-boy of the Bishop of Hildesheim for offending the Kobold. Good night."

The younger student was much alarmed at this wild story; the fierceness of the night without, the moaning of the wind through the tenantless mill within, and the hollow voice of the raging waters, not a little contributing to his dread; and, for a while, he lay silent and stirless, as in a deep sleep. But still he could not close his eyes for intense hunger; and every moment seemed to aggravate his pangs. His companion slept: he was alone, awake: midnight was near.

"Be it for the devil, or be it for an angel," spake the youth

to himself, "I'll now eat of it. I have a better right to it than the devil; and a good spirit will not grudge it to me."

So saying, he rose and stole softly from the side of his sleeping senior, to the corner in which was set the Kobold's supper. In a few minutes he had got through the greater part of it; yet still, though the quantity he consumed was ample, he felt within himself as if he were quite unsatisfied.

"I'll just swallow another mouthful," thought he, "and then to sleep."

Again he attacked the remainder of the meat; and ceased not till he had left only a very little bit in the bowl. He then swallowed the can of beer, sup after sup, until there was but a single drop left to cover the bottom. This done, he stole back again to his still-sleeping companion; and though their couch was no other than the bare boards, he was soon plunged in a profound slumber.

It was now midnight. The storm without still raged fearfully, the elemental strife was even at its height, when both youths awoke at once, and, as it were, involuntarily. As if aware of a supernatural presence, they suddenly cuddled closer together, and hid their faces in each others' bosoms. Well they might be in awe, and one of them, at least, in deadly fear; for the Kobold was in the apartment. At first they could see nothing; but they distinctly heard footsteps among the utensils of the mill. Soon, however, the spirit became visible to them, in the shape of a short, thick-set being, neither boy nor man, but akin to the condition of both, garbed in a party-coloured loose surcoat, and wearing a high-crowned hat with a broad brim on his diminutive head. The first thing the "lubber fiend" did was to set about his nightly work. He went through the mill, inspected the wheels, ascertained that the gear and tackle were in good order, ranged the sacks of flour which had been ground that day close to the door, in readiness for removal on the morrow, and placed the empty bags in proper order close by the mouth of the mill, to be at hand for the grinding of the next day. This done, he peered about in every hole and corner as though to ascertain whether there was any further task to be performed; and then took his seat in the chimney-nook, beside the table on which had been his supper.

It would have been amusing to our youths, under any other circumstances, to have witnessed the singular and grotesque movements of the spirit, as he first sought refreshment in the beer-can, and then peered into the bowl, but found it in neither. He turned both can and bowl bottom upwards, as though their contents had been reversed; then he twirled them on their edges, as if that circular motion were capable of replenishing them; and anon he replaced them in their proper position, prying eagerly into them, as though he expected to find them full. When he perceived that his labour was vain, and found his expectations disappointed, he began to whimper like a whipped child; and then, like a child still, he stamped, and cried, and threw every thing near him about in his fit of rage. In the meantime neither of the watchful youths spake a word; their attention was all absorbed by the proceedings of the spirit — an object of surprise and dread to the one; to the other, of horror, and dismay, and fearful anticipation. The fiend next arose from the empty table, and whirled about on his heel, like a dancing dervish, for upwards of a minute; then uttering a shrill, sharp cry, with one bound he was beside the trembling boys.

“God have mercy on us!” was their involuntary mental exclamation.

“Oh, my poor mother! what will she do if I am killed?” thought the younger; and, boylike, he blubbered in idea at his own death.

They spake not, they stirred not, they lay still as death, and as pale. The goblin bent over them slowly. He first passed his hand along the wooden bench on which they were stretched; then over their entire persons. To the elder, the touch of the spirit felt gentle and soothing; but, to the younger, it seemed as if the fingers of the hand were pointed with poisoned arrow-heads, or fanged with living fire. After he had passed it over the body of the elder from head to heel, leaving a pleasant sensation behind, and over the younger in the same manner, leaving a sensation as though he were carded, he returned once more to the little table in search of food, and once more enacted the former scene, on finding his disappointment. He then sprang back again to the bench, and seizing the offending youth by the hair of the head, dragged him about the mill, and beat him

until he was bruised all over. The elder he did not meddle with. A third time he returned to the table; and a third time he revenged himself on the youth who had robbed him of his supper. The beating he bestowed on him this time was of far greater severity than before; and most probably would have ended with depriving him altogether of life, if it had been much longer continued. But the Kobold, alarmed by the sudden crowing of the house cock, and the booming voice of the great bell of the cathedral of Cologne, all at once vanished.

The surly miller made his appearance with the dawning of day, and roused the youths from the state of torpidity into which they had fallen. He heard their story with many unkind comments; and then sent them forth fasting. As he shut his door upon them, he called out, "Hark ye, my lads! always be honest, and never again eat the Kobold's supper."

It was long ere the ill-treated youth recovered the effects of his own folly. The mill bears a bad name still; and, to this hour, is an object of alarm to the belated citizen.

WESTHOFEN.

THE RIVER FIGHT.

The portion of the Rhine between the villages of Toll and Westhofen, lying on the right bank of the river, is said to have been the scene of one of the most sanguinary affrays which ever took place between the ecclesiastical power of Cologne and the citizens of that proud and turbulent city, in the middle of the thirteenth century. A brief account of the causes which led to it, will be necessary to a detail of the circumstances.

In the year of our Lord 1225, Engelbert the Holy, already alluded to in connexion with the history of Cologne, was slain at the junction of the cross-roads from Gewelsberg and Schwelm,

by Frederic von Isenburg, one of the predatory barons in his diocese, whom he had, as chief of the Vehmgerichte, or secret tribunal, summoned to Soest to answer for his many high crimes and misdemeanours. The body of the prelate was transpierced with seven-and-twenty mortal wounds. But the murderer escaped to Liege. There, however, he was subsequently captured. His punishment followed shortly after. He was broken alive on the wheel in Cologne, and all his estates confiscated.

The death of the assassin, and the disinherison of his children, led, however, to serious consequences to the ecclesiastical power in Cologne. While the successor of Engelbert was occupied in conquering all resistance on the part of the relatives and kinsmen of the murderer, the citizens of that proud city were occupied in taking the most active steps for organising an effectual opposition to the claims of feudal sovereignty put forward by preceding archbishops, and founding that " fierce democracy " which, for full two centuries afterwards, gave his successors so much trouble, and cost such an expenditure of blood and treasure on both sides.

Konrad von Hochstetten followed Henry von Mölenack, whose immediate predecessor was Engelbert. Of all the prelates who had till then filled the archiepiscopal throne of Cologne, Konrad von Hochstetten was, perhaps, the proudest, the boldest, and the most imperious. He knew no law but his own will; he had no thought that did not subserve to his boundless ambition. Violence, cunning, corruption, treachery, were the instruments he alternately employed to advance his views; he hesitated not at all to use the foulest means to accomplish the worst purposes. The first act of his government was the construction of a strong castle at Deutz, on the opposite side of the river, as much with the intention of overawing the unquiet citizens of Cologne as of furthering his projects for obtaining complete possession of the confiscated property of the orphans of Isenburg. He hoped too, by this means, to acquire an accession of territory in the county of Limburg, on the defeat of their uncles, the lords of that fertile land, who had taken up arms in the defence of their brother's children. His second was, to attack the forces of those nobles at all points. After much hard fighting, protracted for a

considerable period, the Counts of Limburg were both slain; and Conrad annexed the greater part of their possessions to the ecclesiastical principality, or electorate, of Cologne.

His next proceeding was a wicked attempt to conciliate a portion of the citizens of Cologne, to the end that, by dividing the united interest which they all had in opposing the episcopal power, and breaking them up into separate parties, he might be the better enabled to wield them to his will. With this view he commenced the erection of the cathedral, the first stone of which was laid by himself in person, with extraordinary pomp, in the presence of the Emperor of Germany, William of Holland, and many other princes and high dignitaries of the church and state.

The burghers of Cologne long claimed and exercised the rights of Roman citizens, on plea of a pretended rescript of Vespasian, and also on the still stronger of immemorial custom. The ecclesiastical princes had hitherto never disturbed those rights, though they denied the force and validity of the pleas, and asserted that the privileges enjoyed were conceded as grants by their respective predecessors in the sovereignty. Perhaps, as is seen daily in every dispute of parties, both were right, and both were wrong. However that may have been, from the period of Bishop Bruno's accession, under Otto the Great, A.D. 949, to the time under present consideration—the government of Conrad von Hochstetten, A.D. 1237–61—there existed no cordiality between the sovereigns of Cologne and their civic subjects. The population of Cologne, then the chief city of Northern Europe, was divided into two classes—the nobles and the populace. The former claimed to be patrician, and arrogated to themselves, for a long time, all the offices and dignities of the magistracy; the latter consisted chiefly of artisans and mechanical labourers of various trades and callings, the majority of them weavers. They were excluded from every thing like the remotest participation in the government. Yet, notwithstanding this apparent incongruity of interests, both classes agreed very well together; and, until the time of Conrad von Hochstetten, their united strength was uniformly directed against the encroachments of the ecclesiastical authority.

The first decided outbreak against the archbishops, accom-

panied with an effusion of blood, took place in the reign of Hanno the Second, A.D. 1055–75. This short but sanguinary insurrection was the precursor of all those fearful commotions; now between the archbishop and the population generally; now between the privileged classes and the common people; again, among the patricians themselves; and, lastly, between the patricians, aided by the episcopal power, and those aristocracies of wealth, the guilds or trades of the city. It may not be uninteresting to revert rapidly to it before proceeding any further with this narrative.

“Hanno,” according to Lambert von Aschaffenburg,* “was a man of considerable scholastic learning, great private virtue, and much piety; but he was also a man of exceeding severity of manners. He had one fault which deformed all his excellences,” continues this quaint old historian, “even as a spot will do the brightest body betimes.” That fault, it appears, was a freedom of speech in reprehending individual delinquency, or public abuses which amounted to absolute licentiousness. If there was no other objection to his rule, that single one would be all-sufficient in a city like Cologne, where wealth had given birth to luxury, and where wantonness had become the great characteristic of the people. But there was another, a greater still in their eyes, against him. He had been concerned in the forcible and treacherous abduction of Henry the Fourth from his widowed mother; and had been appointed guardian and tutor to the infant emperor during his minority.† Cologne had been always loyal to the emperors of Germany, from whom it professed to hold its privileges; and, therefore, any thing which affected the dignity or personal honour of the sovereign, was, in their opinion, entirely opposed to their own freedom and interests.

At the period of this outbreak, the Bishop of Münster‡ was on a visit to the Archbishop Hanno, for the purpose of celebrating the feast of Easter. As this prelate prepared to leave Cologne, he seized, on the shore of the Rhine, where it lay, a

* “Limburg Chronicle.”

† For the history of that hapless prince, vide art. “Hammerstein,” in this volume.

‡ Then, Mimmigartengenfurt.

bark belonging to a citizen of that city ; and would have forcibly appropriated it to the conveyance of himself and his suite down the river, but for the spirited and effective resistance of a young merchant, the son of the owner, who was then in charge of the vessel. From words the parties proceeded to blows ; and the city was speedily in an uproar. The common people hastened to the shore in crowds ; the nobility held themselves in readiness within their houses to take advantage of the disturbance ; the magistracy were unable or unwilling to quell the tumult. It was not until messengers from the archbishop arrived at the scene of commotion, and threatened with the vengeance of the church, as well as the severity of the state, all engaged in it, that the uproar ceased, and the rioters dispersed.

The following Sunday was St. George's day ; and the archbishop preached the annual sermon in honour of that saint in the church dedicated to him.* On that occasion, he availed himself of the opportunity to publicly reprove the citizens for the part they had taken in this riot ; and he denounced them with such bitterness, that a feeling of violent indignation took possession of the breasts of all present. He called them by every vile name, and bestowed on them every abusive epithet, which the rugged idioms, and uncultivated modes of speech, common in the middle as well as in the classical ages, allowed. He said they were all fiends, that they had no chance of ever seeing heaven, and that their city was given over by God as a prey to the devil. Among those who heard him was the young merchant, to whose resistance of the Bishop of Münster the riot was entirely owing. This young man, excited by his recent quarrel, and rendered, perhaps, vain by the temporary distinction it gave him among those of his own age in the city, was greatly enraged at this fierce attack on his native place and his fellow-citizens. He hastened from the church, soon collected a crowd of idle or dissolute companions, and, with an increasing force, hurried through the chief streets of the city, crying aloud against the archbishop's tyranny, and exciting the citizens anew

* St. Gorus, or St. George, is now devoted to the Protestant form of worship.

to violence and insurrection. At every open space he made a stand; and there, elevated on the shoulders of those who accompanied him, violently harangued the maddened mob.

"The archbishop," he would exclaim, "is a proud, tyrannical prelate; he grasps whatever comes within his reach of our property, and then calls us a pack of blackguards. He is the oppressor of our city: he wishes to deprive us of our liberties." On which the mob would cheer and shout most vociferously for his downfall.

"The valiant citizens of Worms," he continued, "have expelled their bad bishop, because he rebelled against our liege lord the emperor. Shall we, who are greater far than they, in riches, and numbers, and power—shall we endure the cruelty and oppression of this Hanno, rebel and tyrant as he is? Shall we endure him any longer?"

Again the crowd cheered and shouted, as a public mob will ever do, with cause or without it. But they addressed themselves now to something more daring than mere exclamation. "The young blood" of Cologne, like that of every other opulent trading or manufacturing city, was easily excited. Knowing nothing of war but its name and its glory, they blindly rushed forward to win the dazzling prize. Setting themselves at the head of the mob, they scoured the streets in a tumultuous crowd, armed with a variety of weapons; the "rabble rout" followed, yelling and shrieking like hell-dogs broke loose from the leash of the fiend. In this guise they gained the archbishop's palace. Hanno was at table with his friend, the Bishop of Münster, when the mob made their appearance before his abode. Not a moment was to be lost. The outer gates of the palace were at once assailed. They were soon forced. Some of the servants who defended them were slain, the rest were grievously wounded. Just, however, at the moment the mob made good their entrance into the precincts of the palace, and immediately that the work of death began with the archbishop's domestics, it was noticed, as a singular fact, that the young merchant who had led them thither, all at once disappeared, no one knew how or whither, and left them from thenceforward entirely under the guidance of their own evil passions. This

circumstance, most probably attributable to cowardice, gave rise to a tradition that the fiend in person was the first promoter of the insurrection.

In the meanwhile, Hanno escaped to the cathedral by the assistance of some of his friends and domestics, and there barricaded all the doors and windows through which his enemies might be able to obtain entrance. It was fortunate for him that he did so; for he had scarcely got thither when the last defences of the palace were forced, and the riotous, blood-thirsty rabble filled every apartment. The work of destruction and the work of death were then conjoined; and, while the maddened mob continued in possession of the palace, both went hand in hand together. The doors and windows were all dashed to pieces; the rich and costly furniture was broken and trampled under foot in the most wanton manner; the private treasures of the prelate were appropriated to their own purposes by the thieves; the treasures of the church were most impartially served in the same manner; and, finally, the cellars were burst open, and all the valuable wines they contained were either drunk on the spot, or allowed to run to waste. Several of the plunderers paid the forfeit of their lives, while in a state of drunken unconsciousness. They were either suffocated by the quantity of strong liquor they had swallowed; drowned by the overflowing of the wine butts, as they lay senseless on the cellar floor; or trampled to death by their stronger and less helpless companions in the crush and confusion consequent upon such a scene of unbridled licentiousness and wild disorder. One of the servants of the palace, who had concealed himself in an empty butt, was dragged upward to the great hall, and there, in the belief that he was the archbishop himself, slain in the cruellest manner by the mob.

But the mistake was speedily discovered; and then the rioters betook themselves to the cathedral. They surrounded and attacked it on every side; and, finding it impregnable to their efforts, threatened to burn it over the heads of those who held it, if they did not at once send the archbishop forth among them to meet the fate, they said, he merited. Those within held a parley with them on this threat; and purposely consumed as much time as they could in arranging the terms of the treaty

which was to take place between the parties. During this discussion night fell ; and Hanno once more escaped. His escape this time was a very narrow one ; for he only succeeded in passing through the assailants by disguising himself as a servant of the church. The rioters then entered, and found he had fled. Their rage knew no bounds. He, meanwhile, had sought refuge in the house of a canon of the cathedral, which adjoined the city walls, and to whom he had, happily, some short time before, given permission to cut a small door-way in them, for the purpose of more speedily gaining his country seat which lay in the vicinity. Through this portal the archbishop himself by this means passed, and escaped the fury of his sanguinary subjects. Without the walls he found his friend, the Bishop of Münster, in waiting for him with a fleet saddle-horse. Mounting at once, both prelates galloped off as speedily as possible to Neuss, down the river.

The rioters, balked in their immediate object, possessed themselves, however, of all the military posts in the city, and manned the walls in readiness to repel any assault from without. To satiate their thirst for blood, and, in some degree, compensate for its non-extinction in that of the archbishop, they hung a poor fellow in the market-place, for the crime of being accessory to the prelate's escape, though it was clearly proved that he was entirely unacquainted with any of the circumstances attending it ; and they flung an old woman from the highest part of the walls into the dry ditch beneath, where she was dashed at once to pieces, under the pretext that she had bewitched a man, who had been for some time previously in a state of idiotic madness. This done, they despatched emissaries to the court of Henry the Fourth, the reigning Emperor of Germany, who then resided at Worms, to inform him of their proceedings ; to justify the course they had taken in expelling his ancient enemy ; and to pray him to take their city under his immediate protection.

It was not to be expected that a man of Hanno's temper would submit quietly to this indignity, or leave the death of his servants unavenged on their murderers. The citizens, in this belief, became very uneasy. Many causes conduced to increase their uneasiness. First, the continued absence of their emissaries

at the court of the emperor; secondly, the rumour that the archbishop was concentrating a large force to attack them; and, thirdly, the positive want of fresh provisions, the pious country folk refusing to supply the city with them any longer. The peasants only knew Hanno as a great prince and a holy prelate; he was to them in the light of a father, and a protector against the oppression of their feudal superiors; while those of them who held estates directly under the ecclesiastical power, stood forward in his cause, as well-minded men will always do in that of a benefactor: for then, as now, the church was the most lenient landlord. The result was, that what with horror at the act of the citizens; what with religious enthusiasm; and what with gratitude and fealty to the person of Hanno, within less than a week upwards of twenty thousand men of every condition, fully armed and accoutred, and all anxious for battle, had flocked round his banners, and were ready to advance on Cologne at his command. With the majority of those who thus came forward in his aid, the quarrel assumed the character of a crusade or holy war. Some, however, there were among them who were actuated by less sincere motives, and who looked with a degree of impious eagerness to the sack and plunder of that rich and populous city. With this force Hanno marched on Cologne, and at once sat down before it in due form.

Within twenty-four hours from his appearance before their walls, the courage of the burghers had oozed out in every direction; and, fear taking possession of their souls at the sight of such a numerous army, they capitulated unconditionally, after making every possible effort to obtain favourable terms. The only conditions they could obtain from him they had so shamefully injured was an equivocal answer, couched in scriptural terms. "He would not deny pardon to those who were truly repentant," was all he said.

Hanno did not exercise his power as it might have been imagined he would by those acquainted with the circumstances of the case, and the social condition of the period. Those who had sacrilegiously entered the churches, and destroyed or plundered the property contained therein, he condemned to the various degrees of ecclesiastical punishment prescribed by the canon law for such offences. Some were obliged to do public

penance at the church-gates; some to implore pardon of the archbishop on his throne, before the high altar of the cathedral in plenary service; some to be publicly scourged in front of the churches, and in the market-places. This lenity, however, did not much please his followers; but their displeasure was at its height, when he refused to permit their sojourn in the city, and marched them outside the walls on the night of the surrender, where they were encamped until the next morning. Notwithstanding this wise precaution, however, a body, amounting to six hundred in number, forced one of the gates of the city; and, making good their entrance, commenced the work of plunder, violence, and destruction. It was with much difficulty that the archbishop, who was speedily apprised of the circumstance, succeeded in restoring order, though he hastened in person to the scene, and exposed himself to the greatest danger in his efforts to repress the licentiousness of his soldiery.

In a few days, Hanno was once again master of Cologne, with a power in his hands which he never before possessed. After he had established peace and order, and brought back trade and commerce into their old and accustomed channels, shortly before his death he restored to the citizens the privileges which they had forfeited by this act of insurrection, and gave them once more that municipal freedom which they had heretofore so abundantly enjoyed, and so shamefully abused.

This was the first revolt of the citizens of Cologne against their sovereign; and as it influenced all the others which followed, though its bearing upon the main object of these pages be but indirect, it has been deemed proper to enter into it at some length, and to give its principal particulars.

From this time until the accession of Conrad von Hochstetten, the archbishops of Cologne were continually at variance with the emperors of Germany. The burghers, however, uniformly sided with the chief sovereign. The city in the meanwhile grew in wealth and power every year; and the citizens from day to day acquired fresh privileges from the weakness or the wisdom of their rulers. While the archbishops were occupied in adding to the extent of their principality, the burghers were busied in organising their internal resources, so as to be

able effectually to resist all encroachments on their liberties. Thus stood matters, ready for an eruption, at the period when Conrad von Hochstetten assumed the archiepiscopal dignity.

Conrad von Hochstetten was not a man to relinquish the least particle of his own personal rights, or those of the church of which he held the proxy, while he had the power to enforce them ; and the citizens of Cologne were as proud and as obstinate for their privileges as he was. Thus cause was not long a-wanting for quarrel between them. It arose, ostensibly, from some pecuniary circumstances ; but it is beyond a doubt that it would have sprung up from any other source as well, so strong was the disposition on both sides to come to issue on the great subject of local-government in the city.

In the city of Cologne, as in the city of Mainz, and likewise in many other of the cities of Europe, in the middle ages, the right of coining money for circulation was vested in some of the most ancient families resident within its walls ; from the exercise of which right these families were generally known as " money companies,"* among their fellow - citizens. Though originally derived from the chief power in the state, and, therefore, capable of being resumed by it when policy or expediency required, this right, by long use and immemorial custom, had come to be looked on as inalienable by those who enjoyed it. No doubt their views were strengthened, rather than made weak, by the advantages they derived from its possession. This right, however, Conrad von Hochstetten gave them notice of resuming to the state in his own person. The consequence was an immediate and alarming insurrection, excited by the numberless friends and followers of those interested in its retention. The magistracy, too, took part in the revolt ; and the common people, always ready for riot, joined in it without hesitation. The archbishops of Cologne at that period seldom or never resided in the city. They held their court at Bonn ; and from thence Conrad issued his edicts. This added not a little to the irritation of the inhabitants ; an irritation which was much increased by his haughty deportment towards a deputation, consisting of their burgomaster and principal pa-

* Münz genossen.

tricians, who waited on him for the purpose of inducing him to withdraw his resolution respecting their monetary privileges. He was, however, inflexible. He would hear nothing against his favourite project ; but loaded the deputies with reproaches, and dismissed them with contempt.

The archbishop was a brave and a bold, as well as an obstinate and an obdurate man ; and he was, moreover, sufficient of a politician to be perfectly well aware of the advantage of activity in all matters of opposition. No sooner, therefore, had he received intelligence of the revolt, than he concentrated all his available forces at Bonn ; and, secretly embarking them in every kind of vessel fit for the purpose, he dropped down the river, with the view of taking Cologne by surprise. The embarkation took place within a few hours of the dawning of an early autumn morning. He wished to reach that city before sunrise ; and calculated that the walls might be possessed ere the inhabitants had awoke from their slumbers. But the promoters of the insurrection had timely information of the project ; and they had provided for the emergency in a most effectual manner. It was resolved by them, in a hasty council called for the purpose, that the flotilla of the archbishop should not be permitted to near the city ; and that the battle which was to decide the fate of their liberties should be fought as distant from its precincts as possible. Accordingly, every vessel lying in the port of Cologne was put into immediate requisition, and filled with town's folk eager for the onslaught. They were then towed up the stream to meet the descending armament of the archbishop. By cause of some of those delays which can never be calculated on, the latter were longer on the voyage than it was designed they should be ; and day had broken for some time before they came in sight of the towers of Cologne. Another view of a much more disagreeable aspect, however, awaited them. Just as they swept round the head-land, which abuts from the village of Godorf, and embraces that of Sürdt, on the opposite bank of the Rhine, they beheld, ranged in several deep files across the stream, so as completely to obstruct its further navigation, the fleet of the rebel burghers, consisting of craft of all kinds, with a great proportion of the large, strong vessels of the low countries among them. They

were moored in triple lines, and connected both shores, from Westhofen, on the one side, to Rodenkirchen, on the other. The larger vessels were moored in mid-current; the smaller filled up every unoccupied spot on the surface of the stream. On each bank of the river was drawn up a considerable body of armed men, flanked by a countless crowd of on-lookers, who hovered on their skirts like ravens over a field of carnage. The little island of Rodenkirchen was occupied with a strong force of citizens; and the houses in the respective villages of Rodenkirchen and Westhofen were all converted into temporary fortifications. Such was the appearance of the scene when the archbishop's flotilla hove in sight.

Conrad was not unprepared for resistance; but he had not the most distant idea of such a one as now offered itself. His chief

officers would have dissuaded him from encountering such fearful odds; representing to him that defeat was inevitable, inasmuch as his opponents were ten to one against him; and urging him to return to Bonn while yet a hope remained of making good his retreat. But Conrad was not to be dissuaded; the flotilla held on its course; and even as this argument proceeded, they were borne abreast of the enemy's line by the force of the current. Nothing now remained for them but to sell their lives as dearly as possible; victory on their side was seen at once to be quite out of the question. To it they accordingly went, the archbishop's bark leading the van; and a river fight ensued, which is still memorable in the annals of the Rhine, as one of the most sanguinary ever decided on its waters.

The battle lasted the whole day long. Both parties combated with a bravery worthy of the brightest era of German valour. Conrad was ever foremost in the fight; and every weapon in the ranks of the rebels was directed against him during the continuance of the action. Yet, by some unaccountable interposition of Providence, he remained unhurt through the entire affray, though hundreds of his best and boldest, friends and followers, fell around him. Night only put an end to the engagement.

The archbishop drew off in the darkness, and reached Bonn by daylight the following morning, dispirited, disheartened, defeated, at the very same moment that the rebels returned to Cologne in triumph, greeted by the deafening shouts of a population frantic with joy, drunken with victory, and wild with the certainty of freedom.

This was the first open attempt upon the rights of the citizens, and the privileges of the city of Cologne, by the Archbishop Conrad von Hochstetten. A temporary peace was concluded between the parties shortly afterwards.

The further history of this ambitious prelate has been already treated of at some length; only once again shall a necessity arise to allude to him more.

ZÜNDORF.

THE WATER-SPIRIT.

Every river, every stream, every brook, every brooklet, and every fountain in Germany, is patronised by its own particular spirit ; can it be imagined then, for a moment, that old father Rhine alone is without any such progeny? Yet, strange to say, this famous river partakes less of the marvellous in that respect than most others in that land of legend : and no water spirits, except the Lurley, or Undine, of whom more hereafter, and the Waterman, of whom anon, have found celebrity, and a permanent abode on its shores, or in its waters. The subsequent traditions are all that can be gleaned on the subject of the latter.

About the middle of the sixteenth century, when Zündorf was no larger than it is at present, there lived at the end of the village, hard by the church, one of that useful class of women termed midwives. She was an honest, industrious creature ; and what with ushering the new-born into life, and then assisting to cover their nakedness, by making garments for them subsequently, she contrived to creep through the world in comfort, if not in complete happiness.

The summer had been one of unusual drought, and the winter, of a necessity, one of uncommon scarcity : so that when the spring arrived there was consequently less to do in her line than there had been at any period for the preceding seven years. In fact, she was totally unemployed. As she mused one night, lying a-bed, on the matter, and prayed that the future might be plenty of provisions, which she wisely knew would cause a plenty in the embryo population—for she was a sensible woman in her way—she was startled from an incipient doze by a sharp, quick knock at the door of her cottage. She hesitated for a moment to answer the call, but the knocking was repeated with more violence than before. This caused her to spring out of her bed without more delay, and hasten to ascertain the wish of her impatient visitor. She opened the door in the twinkling of an eye ; and, behold ! a man, tall of stature, enveloped in a large dark cloak, stood before her.

"My wife is in need of thee," he said to her abruptly :
"her time is come—follow me !"

"Nay, but the night is dark, sir," replied she ; "whither do you desire me to follow ?"

"Close at hand," he answered, as abruptly as before.
"Boune ye quick, and follow me."

"I will but light my lamp and place it in the lantern," said she. "It will not cost me more than a moment's delay."

"It needs not—it needs not," repeated the stranger rapidly ;
"the spot is close by. I know every foot of the ground. Follow ! follow !"

There was something so imperative, and at the same time so irresistible, in the manner of the man, that she said not another word ; but, drawing her warm cloak about her head, she followed him at once. Not a word was spoken by either. Ere she was aware of the course he had taken, however, so dark was the night, and so wrapped up was she in her cloak and her own meditations, she found herself on the bank of the river, just opposite the low, fertile islet, which bears the same name as the village, and lies at a little distance from the shore.

"How is this, good sir ?" she exclaimed, in a tone of surprise and alarm. "You have missed the path—you have left your road. Here is no outlet to go further."

"Silence, and follow," were the only words he spoke in reply ; but they were uttered in such a manner as shewed her at once that her best course was obedience.

They were now at the edge of the mighty stream ; the rushing waters washed their feet. The poor woman would fain have drawn back ; but she could not for the life of her : such was the preternatural power exercised over her by the mere presence of her companion.

"Fear not—follow !" he spake again, in a kinder tone to her, as the current kissed the hem of her garments.

He took the lead of her. The waters opened to receive him. A wall of crystal seemed built up on each side the vista. He plunged into its depths ; she followed. The wild wave gurgled over them ; they were walking along the shiny pebbles and glittering sands which strewed the bed of the river.

And now a change came over her indeed. She had left all

on earth in the thick darkness of a starless spring night ; yet all around her was lighted up like a mellow harvest eve, when the sun shines refulgent through masses of golden clouds, on the smiling pastures and emerald meadows of the west. She looked up, but she could see no cause for this illumination ; she looked down, and her search was equally unsuccessful. She seemed to herself to traverse a great hall of surpassing transparency, lighted up with a light resembling that given out by a huge globe of ground glass. Her conductor still preceded her. They approached a little door. The chamber within it contained the object of their solicitude. On a couch of Mother of Pearl, surrounded by sleeping fishes and drowsy syrens, who could evidently afford her no assistance in her interesting state, lay the sick lady.

“ Here is my wife,” spake the stranger, as they entered this chamber. “ Take her in hand at once ; and hark ye, mother ! heed that she has no injury through thee, or ——”

With these words he waved his hand, and, preceded by the obedient inhabitants of the river, who had, until then, occupied the chamber, he left the apartment.

The midwife approached her patient with fear and trembling : she knew not what to anticipate—perhaps a mermaid ! She was as much terrified as she well could be. What was her surprise, however, to perceive that she was like any other female ; and that there seemed no further cause of fear from her than the submarine situation in which she was placed very naturally inspired. The business in hand was soon finished ; and both midwife and patient then began to talk together, as all women will do whenever an opportunity is afforded them.

“ It surprises me much,” quoth the former, “ to see such a handsome young lady as you are buried down here in the bottom of the river. Do you never visit the land ? Oh, what a loss it is to you !”

“ Hush ! hush !” interposed the Triton’s lady, placing her fore finger significantly on her lips : “ you peril your life by talking thus without guard. Go to the door, look out that you may see if there be any listeners ; then I will tell you something to surprise you.”

The midwife did as she was directed. There was no living

being within ear-shot, except it might be a large jack pike flitting by, following, perhaps, his predatory occupation.

"Now listen,"—said the lady.

The midwife was all ear.

"—I am a woman, a Christian woman, like yourself," she continued; "though I am here now in the home of my husband, who is the spirit of these mighty waters."

"God be praised!" ejaculated her auditor.

"My father was the lord of the hamlet of Rheidt, a little above Lülldorf, and I lived there in peace and happiness during my girlish days. I had nothing to desire, as every wish was gratified by him as soon as it was formed. However, as I grew to womanhood I felt that my happiness had departed. I knew not whither it had gone, or why—but gone it was. I felt restless, melancholy, wretched. I wanted, in short, something to love;—but that I found out since. Well, one day a merry-making took place in the village, and every one was present at it. We danced on the green-sward, which stretches to the margin of the river: for that day I forgot my secret grief, and was among the gayest of the gay. They made me the queen of the feast; and I had the homage of all. As the sun was going down in glory in the far west, melting the masses of clouds into liquid gold, a stranger of a noble mien appeared in the midst of our merry circle. He was garbed in green from head to heel; and seemed to have crossed the river, for the hem of his rich riding-cloak was dripping with wet. No one knew him—no one cared to inquire who he was; and his presence rather awed than rejoiced us. He was, however, a stranger, and he was welcome. When I tell you that stranger is my husband, you may imagine the rest. When the dance then on foot had ended, he asked my hand. I could not refuse it if I would; but I would not if I could. He was irresistible. We danced—oh, such spirits as I felt that day! We danced and danced, until the earth seemed to reel around us. I could perceive, however, even in the whirl of tumultuous delight, which forced me onward, that we neared the water's edge in every successive figure. We stood—at length we stood on the verge of the stream; the current caught my dress; the villagers shrieked aloud, and rushed to rescue me from the river."

"Follow!" said my partner, plunging as he spoke into the foaming flood.

"I followed. Since then I have lived with him here. It is now a century since; but he has communicated to me a portion of his own immortality, and I know not age, neither do I dread death any longer. He is good and kind to me, though fearful to others. The only cause of complaint I have is his invariable custom of destroying every babe to which I give birth, on the third day after my delivery. He says it is for my sake, and for their sakes, that he does so: and he knows best. I felt it very much at first; but I am used to it now." She sighed heavily as she said it.

"A very cruel custom it is," interposed the midwife; "though, mayhap, he has his own reasons for it."

"And now," resumed the lady, "I must give you one piece of advice; which, if you would keep your life, you must implicitly adopt. My husband will return incontinent. Be on your guard, I bid you. He will offer you gold—he will pour out the countless treasures he possesses before you—he will proffer you diamonds, and pearls, and priceless gems; but, heed well what I say to you, take nothing more from him than you would from any other person. Take the exact sum you are wont to receive on earth, and take not a kreutzer more, or your life is not worth a moment's purchase.—It is the forfeit."

"He must be a cruel being, indeed!" ejaculated the midwife aloud. "God deliver me from this dread and great danger!"

"See you yon sealed vessels?" spake the lady, without seeming to heed her fright, or hear her ejaculation.

The midwife looked, and saw ranged on an upper shelf of the apartment about a dozen small pots, like pipkins, all fast sealed, and labelled in unknown characters.

"These pots," pursued she, "contain the souls of those who have been, like you, my attendants in childbirth; but who, for slighting the advice I gave them as I now give you, and permitting a spirit of unjust gain to take possession of their hearts, were deprived of life by my husband. Heed well what I say. He comes now. Be silent and discreet."

As she spake the water-spirit entered. He first asked his

wife how she felt ; and his tones were like the rushing sound of a current heard afar off. Learning from her own lips that she was as well as could be expected, he then turned to the midwife, and thanked her most graciously ; but in a voice very like distant thunder.

“ Now come with me,” he said ; “ I must pay thee for thy services.”

She followed him from the sick chamber into the treasury of that subaqueous palace. It was a spacious crystal vault, lighted up, like the rest of the palace, from without ; but within it was resplendent with treasures of all kinds. He led her to a huge heap of shining gold, which ran the whole length of the chamber.

“ Here,” said he, “ take what you will. I put no stint upon you.”

The trembling woman picked up a single piece of the smallest coin she could find in the heap.

“ This is my fee,” she spake. “ I ask no more than a fair remuneration for my labour.”

The water-spirit's brow blackened like a tempestuous night, and he shewed his green teeth for a moment as if in great ire ; but the feeling, whatever it was, appeared to pass away as quickly as it came. He then led her to a huge heap of pearls.

“ Here,” he said, “ take what you will. Perhaps you like these better ? They are all pearls of price ; or, may be, you would wish for some memento of me. Take what you will.”

But she still declined to take any thing more, although he tempted her with all his treasures. She had not forgotten the friendly advice of her patient.

“ I desire nothing more from you, great prince as you are, than I receive from one of my own condition.” This was her uniform answer to his intreaties. “ I thank you ; but I may not take aught beside my due.”

“ It was Providence or my wife that put it in your head to say so,” he spake, after a short pause. “ If you had taken more than your due, you would have perished by my hands.”

The poor woman gave God thanks for her deliverance, and prayed to the throne of grace for a speedy release from her painful position.

“ And now,” proceeded the spirit, “ you shall home ; but, first, take this. Fear not.”

As he spake he dipped his finny hands in the heap of gold, and poured out their fulness into her lap.

“ Use that,” he continued ; “ use it without fear. It is a gift : no evil will come of it. I give ye my royal word.”

He beckoned her onward without waiting for her reply ; and they were walking once again through the corridors of the palace.

“ Adieu !” he said, waving his hand to her. “ Adieu !”

Darkness fell around her in a moment. In a moment more she awoke as from a dream in her own warm bed.

The tradition further says that she visited the subaqueous palace of the spirit more than once afterwards, and that she succeeded in emancipating her mother’s sister’s daughter’s soul from one of the pipkins.

Thus far the water-spirit.

GODORF.

WILL-O’-THE-WISP.

Where the Rhine makes a wide reach a little above Cologne, between the villages, or rather hamlets, of Rodenkirchen and Godorf, that “ tricksy sprite,” so well known in England as “ Will-o’-the-Wisp,” is said by the dwellers on its shore to make the peninsula his particular haunt. The neighbourhood is full of legends of his freaks. He is known among the peasants of the river-shore by the name of Heerwisch ; and they have a popular jingle, or *spott-reim*, as it is termed, which, say they, he so dislikes, that he follows whosoever repeats it in his hearing, and maltreats them cruelly, mayhap murders them outright.

Once on a time, some centuries since, as he danced over the marshes which then covered the greater part of this spot, a

young girl of Godorf, who was crossing the fields to her father's cottage late in the evening, sang this rhyme aloud in the wantonness of a heedless heart, and the exuberance of high animal spirits :—

“ Heerwisch ! ho ! ho ! ho !
Brenst wie haberstroh,
Schlag mich blitzblo !” *

On which the goblin pursued her at once, followed her into the house before she could shut the door in his face, and flapped his fiery wings at every person present, to their great terror and deep dismay. All were stunned by the shock, as though a thunderbolt had fallen among them ; and the young girl herself, the cause of the commotion, never completely recovered the effects of the fright.

The goblin, it is said, also assumes occasionally other shapes ; and it is related, that to flit about the fens in the guise of a female is one of his favourite fancies. In the chronicles of the ancient abbey of Kreutzberg, near Bonn, it is related with a most particular accuracy, how a certain brother Sebastian, a monk of that celebrated monastery, on the eve of St. John, in the year of salvation 1034, suffered himself to be seduced by the blandishments of a maiden most lovely to the sight, as he returned homewards from Cologne ; and how that tempter was no other than the marsh sprite, Heerwisch, or Will-o'-the-Wisp. The chronicle further proceeds to state, that the monk reached the abbey the same night, but that he was in a state of somnambulism ; that he took to his bed at once on his arrival ; that he fell deadly sick ere he had time to rise the next morning ; and that, finally, about the same hour the following evening as he had encountered the sprite on the preceding night, he gave up the ghost. The abbot revealed to the brotherhood such portions of his confession as he thought would prevent their future seduction ; but it does not appear with what effect. For ages after it was said, that brother Sebastian was to be seen

* It is in a barbarous patois, which may be thus translated :—

“ Heerwisch ! ho ! ho !
Flare like a low,
Come, or I go.”

every St. John's eve dancing after the delusive demon* over marsh and moor, until both were lost to view in the broad expanse of the river.

So much for Will-o'-the-Wisp.

LULSDORF.

THE WONDROUS HARP.

There is a ruin adjacent to Lulsdorf, on the right bank of the Rhine, between Cologne and Bonn — a low square tower of uncertain origin — of which the following singular legend is related.

In the time of the Merovignian monarchs — the fifth and sixth centuries of the Christian era — there dwelt in the castle, of which this ruin is said to be the remains of the keep, a powerful chief, who ruled the village of Lulsdorf, then a possession of the Ripuarian Franks, and the circumjacent country along the shores of the noble river. His name has not been handed down to posterity; but the remembrance of a domestic tragedy which took place in his family, still lives in the traditions of the dwellers on the margin of those waters.

This chief had two daughters, both of surpassing beauty; but both as dissimilar in appearance and disposition as may be imagined. One was fair as the morning, when it bursts forth all sunshine and smiles; the other was dark as a starless night be-

* In all likelihood the spirit alluded to by Milton, under the name of friar.

“ And he by friar's lantern led.”

L'Allegro.

Probably, also, Shakspeare's Puck.

“ That shrewd and knavish sprite,
Called Robin Goodfellow ———
That frights the maidens of the villagery.

* * * * *

Misleads night wanderers, laughing at their harm?”

Midsummer Night's Dream, Act 2.

tween the tropics. The fair girl was to be wedded to one who loved her long and well—one whom she loved fondly too ; but her dark sister was still unwooed of any. The nuptial day was fixed ; and every necessary preparation was made for the joyful ceremony.

“ Sister dear !—sister dear ! ” spake the dark ladye to the fair, on the eve of the morning when the marriage was to take place, “ come, let us walk forth on the shore of the shining river. The sun is in the west ; the clouds are like cushions of gold and crimson, on which angels may repose ; the water ripples like to music ; the air is cool and balmy ; every little wave is a mirror to reflect the glories of the sky and the earth—and we shall be so happy.”

She sighed in a very sad fashion as she said these words, but her sister noticed it not ; and they walked forth together. Hand-in-hand they wandered along the banks of the broad Rhine, making the shores vocal with their songs. It was deep twilight before either thought of returning : so pleasantly did time pass that they perceived not its flight. They were just then at the point of that almost peninsular piece of land, formed by the reach of the river, between Zündorf and Nieder Cassell, directly opposite the present village of Nieder Wesseling, which at that period had no existence. Then, as now, the land was marshy, and covered with willow plants to the stream’s edge ; and among the willow twigs grew the broad-leaved lotus, and other water flowers, in rich and rank luxuriance.

“ Sister dear ! sister dear ! ” again spake the dark beauty, “ oh, reach me one of those lovely lilies ! Fain would I pluck it myself, but I fear to fall into the water.”

The gentle, fair girl, stretched forward over the edge of the stream to gratify her sister’s desire ; but, just as her hand had grasped the prize, the perfidious traitress pushed her in. She sank in the bubbling waters with a scream ; and, in a moment, was swallowed up in the depths of the river.

“ Sister ! sweet sister ! ” she shrieked as she rose again to the surface, still struggling with the eager element which gathered round to devour her, “ help ! help ! Give me but your

hand till I get to the shore, and you shall have my girdle of the red, red gold."

"Ha! ha!" laughed the dark girl. "For all the gold on this broad earth you should not have hand of mine to help you. Perish!"

It was thus she answered, as her sister sunk once more.

"Sister! sweet sister!" again shrieked the drowning maiden, once more rising to the surface; and her cry was piteous to hear, commingled as it was with the rushing current which gurgled around her; "help! help! Only hold out your hand till I get to the bank, and you shall have, as you will, my beloved bridegroom."

"Ha! ha! ha!" again laughed the fiend in female shape. "Your bridegroom shall be mine at any rate now; but all the bridegrooms on this broad earth should not buy you from the grave which goes to close over you. Perish!"

The struggling victim sunk again, and the bubbling current rose above her.

"Sister! sweet sister!" once more shrieked the gasping girl, emerging for the last time from the womb of the waves in the strong agony of death; "help! help!—I'll be your bond-slave for ever and ever. Save me—I sink! I sink!"

"Perish!" was the only reply of the female fiend on the shore.

The waters rolled calmly over the spot where the fair importunate had but a moment before struggled vainly against her fate; and only a single ripple on the smooth face of the river pointed out the place where she had perished.

"Banquet below!" muttered the female fiend, her sister, in broken sentences, as she paced homeward. "You shall never see me at your nuptials now. Never shall I behold the man I love be your bridegroom. The sand is your bridal bed: the moaning wind your marriage chorus. Sleep there for ever."

She entered the castle unperceived, as she had left it; and, without attracting the notice of any one, gained her chamber.

An itinerant harper travelling towards Cologne, along the shore, the following morning, encountered the corpse of the murdered maiden. She lay extended on the sands between Lülldorf and the present village of Nieder Cassel; having been borne upwards against the course of the stream by the back-water or counter-current eddy of the river. The metrical legend from which the tale is taken, proceeds thus :

“ The body which lay outstretched on the sands,
Became a beautiful harp in his hands.

For he took the maiden's snow-white breast,
And he made it a place for the chords to rest.

And on her small fingers, so fair to see,
He fixed the strings as well as might be ;

Which out of the locks of her golden hair,
He twined with a skill so wondrous rare.”

The story is so much more compendious versified, that it is not hesitated to present it in that shape in preference to the prose form of narration.

On that night, it will be recollected, the nuptials were to be celebrated. As, however, in those days among the people of these shores, the maiden to be wedded, like an eastern bride, saw not her husband till after the ceremony—nay, until the festal which followed it had concluded—the dark daughter of the house, the murderess host, succeeded in taking her sister's place unobserved and undiscovered of any ; and there she sat beside the bridegroom at the banquet the next night, as proud as proud might be, enveloped in the thick folds of an impervious veil, as it was the custom of maidens of her class and country to be on such occasions. In the meanwhile, the poor harper, impelled by a supernatural impulse, arrived at the scene. The apparent happiness of the party was at its height as he entered the castle. The poem concludes :

“ He strides down the hall with his harp in his hands,—
Before bridegroom and bride like a spirit he stands :

He strikes a sharp chord,—full of grief is the bride,
And vainly she strives her deep anguish to hide.

Another he strikes,—from her face falls the veil ;
Her treachery longer she may not conceal.

As a third cuts like steel into every heart's core,
Shrieking curses, she dies—Lo ! the tragedy 's o'er,"*

URSEL.

THE WATER-WOLF.

The Rhine makes a bold reach opposite the hamlet of Ursel, and sweeps with all the strength of its mighty stream round the little promontory before it. The force of the current causes a dangerous eddy at that point of the river in which, when its waters are swollen by the contributions of its mountain tributaries, many a frail argosy has been engulfed, and many a warm heart made still for ever,

“ Deep in the caverns of the deadly tide.”

This spot is the scene of the subsequent tradition.

It was a fine summer's day. A large bark was dropping down the river: the current was with it; and the wind was favourable for its course. It was filled with a motley crew;

* There is a singular and striking analogy between this wild story of the strange transformation of a human body—that of a female, too—into a harp, and an Irish legend, elegantly versified by Moore in his “ Irish Melodies,” under the title of “ The Origin of the Harp.” It runs thus :

“ 'Tis believed that this harp I now waken for thee,
Was a syren of old who sung under the sea ;
And who often at eve through the bright billows roved,
To meet on the green shore a youth whom she loved.

But she loved him in vain, for he left her to weep,
And in tears all the night her gold ringlets to steep ;
Till Heaven looked with pity on true love so warm,
And changed to this soft harp the sea-maiden's form.

Still her bosom rose fair, still her cheek smiled the same,
While sea-beauties gracefully curled round her frame ;
And her hair, shedding tear-drops from all its bright rings,
Fell over her white arm, to make the gold strings.”

some of them persons from Bonn, who sought the markets of Cologne; some of them natives of Cologne, wending their way homewards after expediting their affairs in the upper country; many were strangers called by business or pleasure to the beautiful banks of the Rhine; while not a few of the crowd were mere idlers engaged in the toilsome occupation of passing away time. By far the greater number, however, were pilgrims who had been at some holy shrine, probably the Kreutzberg, close by Bonn, and who were now on their return to Cologne—their pious duties performed—for the purpose of seeking their respective residences in that great city or its vicinity. Among these, two attracted more attention than all the rest—a mother and her sick son. She was bearing him home to die, after having sought in vain the aid of all the mineral springs in the duchy of Nassau, and prayed without success to all the sainted names in the Catholic calendar. The miserable matron sat in the bow of the boat; her sick boy's head lay on her lap. She looked like a marble statue, on whose countenance the rigidity of intense grief had been everlastingly impressed by the hand of some skilful artist. The son seemed even as a withered lily, over which she cowered in deep anguish and fixed despair. They were alone; for the pilgrims had gone below in the boat; the after-deck was occupied by the young, and the gay, and the thoughtless; and the mariners had sought rest in the shadow of the sails. She bent over her boy, and kissed the cold sweat from his fair face; but he, stirless and silent, his eyes fixed upon the sky, seemed altogether unconscious of her tender attention.

“Oh, God! oh, God!” ejaculated the agonized mother, looking up to that heaven on which her son's eyes were bent. “Oh, God! and must I lose you, my own, my lovely, my first born, my best?”

A peal of distant thunder shook the skies, as if in reply to her passionate adjuration.

The revellers in the after-deck looked up at the heavens too, but it was only for a moment. The wine-cup awaited them; the atmosphere was clear; the heavens were cloudless; the sun shone out with his wonted brilliancy. What was a thunder-clap to them?

"'Tis but for heat!" exclaimed the chief of the group.
"Let's drink while we may."

"Ay, ay," quoth a second, "let's drink to keep away thirst; for thirst follows heat as sure as a corollary follows a demonstration."

The youth who spoke last was a student from Bonn, who, with others of his fellows, had come aboard for a day's frolic. He seemed to be a sort of functionary among these ill-mannered young men, who then, as now, make the name of learning at the university of that ancient seat of science a term of opprobrium and reproach.

"Nay," interposed a third, "let's have a song likewise. Here, *Magister Morum*, give us a stave or two."

The person thus appealed to—a youth with the well-known German cap, a short, shabby, black velvet frock, somewhat in the fashion of an antiquated shooting jacket, a ragged pair of trousers, and a huge meerschaum pipe, more valuable than all the rest of his personal effects put together—stepped into the centre of the group at the call. In addition to this costume, he wore a dirty clerical band around his neck; over his left shoulder, a scarf which might have been white and whole half a century before his birth; and a pair of muddy-coloured buff military gloves, or leather gauntlets, on his huge red hands. He flourished aloft a long, murderous, three-cornered sword—one of those deadly instruments with which the ill-conditioned students at the German universities are wont to murder each other—in one hand; in the other he held a thumb-worn, dog's-eared song-book. By unanimous consent, all the passengers not of this party separated themselves from the group, and sought companionship elsewhere in the vessel. In the meanwhile the *magister*, supported by his myrmidons, in defiance of time and tune, and every accessory to melody, roared out in startling tones the beautiful "*Rhein-Wein-Lied*," of which the following is a specimen, in English versification.

Some of their auditors stopped their ears, some hid themselves below; but still the hideous chorus thundered out:

THE RHINE WINE-SONG.

" O, crown the cup with summer's sweetest flowers,
And pass it proudly round ;
For where on earth, save in these favoured bowers,
Can wine like this be found ?

Chor. Can wine like this be found ?

Our native hills alone unlock the fountains,
From whence these drops are rolled ;
And, blest with them, what care we for the mountains
That only teem with gold ?

Chor. That only teem with gold?

The Rhine ! the Rhine ! thereon our vines are growing —
For ever bless the Rhine !
Along its shores the sunny grapes are glowing,
That weep this racy wine.

Chor. That weep this racy wine.

Come drink ye then, for Love the goblet filleth,
And joy laughs on the brim :
And know ye one whose heart misfortune chilleth,
Oh ! bid it foam for him.

Chor. Oh ! bid it foam for him." *

" Hurrah ! hurrah !" shouted the youths in tones of drunken revelry. "*Es lebe der Rhein !* — The Rhine for ever !"

" Oh, God ! oh, God !" moaned the forlorn mother. " Oh, God ! oh, God ! and must I lose my darling ! While so many around him are wasting their strength in idle merriment, must my child alone want the power of motion, the principle of vitality ? "

Again she bent over the pallid brow of the dying boy, and kissed it ; but he was still, in seeming unconsciousness of her care and of her sorrow.

Another clap of thunder shook the skies. It was nearer than the one which preceded it ; and it excited greater notice ; still, however, the roisterers proceeded.

" A song ! a song !" roared the *magister morum*. " Come, Conrad, let's hear your whistle."

" Come, Conrad," shouted a dozen voices at once ; " the *magister* has a good call now."

* This elegant version of the well-known Rheine-Wein-Lied, is taken from Planché's " Lays and Legends of the Rhine." C. Tilt, Fleet Street.

Conrad, a stout-built, bulky lad, of the hobbledehoy species, then stood forth, nothing loath, and trolled out the following stanzas, in an equally obnoxious strain as his precursor; his companions the while joining in a chorus, dreadful as that of the Eumenides, in a Greek tragedy.

“ The Rhine ! That little word will be
 For aye a spell of power to me,
 And conjure up, in care’s despite,
 A thousand visions of delight !
 The Rhine ! Oh ! where beneath the sun
 Doth our fair river’s rival run ?
 Where dawns the day upon a stream
 Can in such changeful beauty shine,
 Outstripping Fancy’s wildest dream,
 Like our green, glancing, glorious Rhine ?

Born where blooms the Alpine rose,
 Cradled in the Boden see ;*
 Forth the infant river flows,
 Leaping on in childish glee.
 Coming to a riper age,
 He crowns his rocky cup with wine,
 And makes a gallant pilgrimage
 To many a ruined tower and shrine.
 Strong, and swift, and wild, and brave,
 On he speeds with crested wave ;
 And spurning aught like check or stay,
 Fights and foams along his way,
 O’er crag and shoal, until his flood
 Boils like manhood’s hasty blood.”†

The revellers shouted once more, for they were well pleased ; although, to sober minds, the only feeling present was disappointment, that such words, and such a melody as they were set to, should have been so marred in the singing. But the truth must be told. They were nearly all thoroughly intoxicated with the copious libations of Rudesheimer and Cologne beer they had mixed up together in their potations ; and, therefore, any thing done by themselves could not, in that state, fail to gratify them.

* The Lake of Constance.

† Mr. Planché’s pleasing work has also supplied this elegant and spirited piece of versification.

Once more the afflicted mother kissed her expiring child's pale face, and once more she apostrophized the Most High, in accents of the deadliest agony, and of the deepest despair.

"Oh, God! oh, God!" she cried, "and he must perish! He, the fond, the fair, the gentle, and the good! He must perish, while these, in the pride of lusty youth and wilful wantonness, are sporting with that life which, to purchase for my boy, I would give worlds were they mine, and mine own breath into the bargain. Is this justice? Oh, God! oh, God!"

A third thunder-clap crashed over the boat, as if the whole artillery of heaven were discharged off at once.

Up sprang the listless seamen—up rushed the passengers on deck.

"Mother, mother!" shrieked the dying boy, in a tone that wrung every heart in that fated vessel. "Mother! dearest mother! you were ever kind and thoughtful to me. Why trusted you my life to the treacherous flood? Hark! hark!—heard ye not the water-wolf's howl?"

The water-wolf was a name of fear to every being on board the bark: and the unearthly aspect of the dying boy gave the force of a prophecy, on the eve of fulfilment, to his wild ravings. To hear the water-wolf howl, was, in the superstition of the age, and of the people, to hear the voice of the angel of death. Destruction, it was firmly believed, followed, inevitably and speedily, to whosoever was its hapless auditor; and the words of one whom the Almighty had marked out for the grave, were always deemed the words of inspiration—the outpourings of truth. The anguish and dismay of the crowded freight on board that bark may, therefore, be well imagined.

Their anguish and dismay, however, were increased by the appearances which the sky, and the surface of the river, presented. The one grew dark—dark, almost, as at midnight, though the noon of the day had not long passed: the other seethed and boiled as if a subterranean fire were in full action beneath its bosom. A low, sullen roar, was heard in the distance. It was not the thunder—it was not the wind; but it cowered the boldest hearts that beat in the bark that day; and it was distinctly audible to all.

"Mother! mother!" again shrieked the dying boy, "why

trusted ye our lives to the treacherous deep? Wist ye not that whoso smiles the fairest, is oft the fellest foe? Hark! hark! Heard ye not the water-wolf's howl?"

"We'll die together, my boy," sobbed the fond mother. "God is good."

She bent over and kissed him once more, as she spoke, and wiped the dew of death from his pale face, where they stood in large drops on his corrugated brow, or coursed rapidly down his convulsed features.

"The boy is right," said the master-mariner; "it is the water-wolf's roar. There has been thunder up in the mountains, the storm has burst there: the torrents are now dashing down into the river; and we round not yonder point before the swollen stream catch us, we are lost. Ply the oars, my lads, for life or for death."

He spake to the crew, but they seemed not to hear him: they stood paralyzed with fear. In equal terror clung the passengers to the sides and to the mast—to the ropes and to the gear of the vessel. The increasing darkness gave the scene altogether a most supernatural aspect.

Another deep sound was heard; and it now was nearer and more fearful. It was even as the howl of a legion of wolves, and the voice of many waters commingled together, foaming, and dashing, and crashing, and roaring onward.

"Mother! mother!" a third time shrieked the dying boy, "see you not the water-wolf? His jaws gape to swallow us. Kiss me, mother dear! good bye."

"Thank God!" exclaimed the devoted mother; "we shall die together at all events."

She kissed her fair boy as she spoke, and folded him close to her heart.

"The boy is right," again said the master-mariner. "Hope there is none for us on earth now—Heaven have mercy on us! Here comes the water-wolf!"

He pointed to a huge white-crested wave, which was close on the wake of the bark, rushing on to devour it.

When this brief dialogue passed, the bark was before Ursel. In a moment more the raging waters overtopped its bulwarks, and swallowed it down in an ocean of foam. Of the three

hundred and fifty human beings—its freight that day—but one was saved to tell the tale of death and destruction.

The master-mariner it was who thus survived; and to his recollection posterity owes this tradition.

UDORF.

THE MILLER'S MAID.

There is a lonely mill, close by the little hamlet of Udorf, near the Rhine shore, between the villages of Hersel and Ursel, on the left bank below Bonn. This mill is said to have been the scene of the following story; which, whether it be regarded as an instance of presence of mind in a female, or as a special interposition of Providence, is equally remarkable and worthy of attention.

It was on a Sunday morning, "ages long ago," that the miller of this mill, and his whole family, went forth to hear the holy mass at the nearest church, in the village of Hersel. The mill, which was also his residence, was left in charge of a servant-girl named Hännchen, or Jenny, a stout-hearted lass, who had long lived with him in that capacity. An infant child, of an age unfit for church, was left in her charge likewise.

The girl was busily employed in preparing dinner for the return of her master and his family, when who should enter all of a sudden but an old sweetheart of hers, named Heinrich Bottelor. He was an idle, graceless fellow, whom the miller had forbade his house; but whom Jenny, with the amiable perversity peculiar to her sex, only liked, perhaps, all the better because others gave him no countenance. She was glad to see him, and she told him so too; and, although in the midst of her work, she not only got him something to eat at once, but also found time to sit down with him, and have a gossip, while he despatched the food she set before him. As he ate, however, he let fall his knife.

"Pick that up, my lass," said he, in a joking way, to the good-natured girl.

"Nay, Heinrich," she replied, "your back should be more supple than mine, for you have less work to make it stiff. I labour all day long, and you do nothing. But, never mind! 'twould go hard with me an I refused to do more than that for you, bad though you be."

This was spoken half sportively, and half in good earnest; for, kind-hearted as the girl was, and much as she liked the scapegrace, she was too honest and industrious herself to encourage or approve of idleness and a supicious course of life in any one else, however dear to her. She stooped down, accordingly, to pick up the knife. As she was in the act of rising, however, the treacherous villain drew a dagger from under his coat, and caught her by the nape of the neck, griping her throat firmly with his fingers to prevent her screaming the while.

"Now, lass," he said, swearing out a bad oath at the same time; "where is master's money? I'll have that or your life; so take your choice."

The terrified girl would fain have parleyed with the ruffian, but he would hear nothing she could say.

"Master's money or your life, lass!" was all the answer he vouchsafed to her entreaties and adjurations. "Choose at once," was the only alternative he offered her—"The grave or the gold!"

She saw that there was no hope of mercy at his hands; and, as she saw it, her native resolution awoke in her bosom. Like the generality of her gentle sex, she was timid at trifles: a scratch was a subject of fear to her; a drop of blood caused her to faint; an unwonted sound filled her soul with fear in the night. But when her energies were aroused by any adequate cause, she proved, as her sex have ever done, that in courage, in endurance, in presence of mind, and in resources for every emergency, she far surpassed the bravest and coolest men.

"Well, well, Heinrich!" she said, resignedly; "what is to be, must be. But if you take the money, I shall even go along with ye. This will be no home for me any more. But ease your gripe of my neck a little—don't squeeze so hard; I can't

move, you hug me so tight. And if I can't stir you can't get the money, that's clear, you know. Besides, time presses; and if it be done at all, it must be done quickly, as the household will shortly be back from Hersel."

The ruffian relaxed his gripe, and, finally, let go his hold. Her reasons were all cogent with his cupidity.

"Come," she said; "quick! quick!—no delay. The money is in master's bedroom."

She tripped up stairs, gaily as a lark; he followed closely at her heels. She led the way into her master's bedroom, and pointed out the coffer in which his money was secured.

"Here," she said, reaching him an axe which lay in a corner of the room; "this will wrench it open at once: and, while you are tying it up, I shall just step up stairs to my own apartment, and get a few things ready for our flight, as well as my own little savings for the last five years."

The ruffian was thrown off his guard by her openness and apparent anxiety to accompany him. Like all egotists, he deceived himself, when self-deceit was most certain to be his destruction.

"Go, lass," was all he said; "but be not long. This job will be done in a twinkling."

She disappeared at the words. He immediately broke open the chest, and was soon engaged in rummaging its contents.

As he was thus employed, however, absorbed in the contemplation of his prey, and eagerly occupied in securing it on his person, the brave-hearted girl stole down the stairs on tip-toe. Creeping softly along the passages, she speedily gained the door of the chamber unseen by him, and likewise unheard. It was but the work of a moment for her to turn the key in the wards and lock him in. This done, she rushed forth to the outer door of the mill and gave the alarm.

"Fly! fly!" she shrieked to the child, her master's little boy, an infant five years old, the only being within sight or sound of her. "Fly! fly to father! fly on your life! Tell him we shall all be murdered and he haste not back! Fly! fly!"

The child, who was at play before the door, at once obeyed the energetic command of the brave girl; and sped as fast as his

tiny legs could carry him on the road by which he knew his parents would return from church. Hännchen cheered him onward, and inspirited his little heart as he ran.

"Bless thee, boy! bless thee!" she exclaimed, in the gladness of her heart; "an master arrives in time, I will offer up a taper on the altar of our blessed Lady of the Kreutzberg, by Bonn."

She sat down on the stone bench by the mill door to ease her over-excited spirit; and she wept, as she sat, at the thoughts of her happy deliverance.

"Thank God!" she ejaculated, "thank God for this escape. Oh! the deadly villain! and I so fond of him, too!"

A shrill whistle from the grated window of the chamber in which she had shut up the ruffian Heinrich caught her ear, and made her start at once to her feet.

"Diether! Diether!" she heard him shout; "catch the child, and come hither! I am fast. Come hither! Bring the boy here, and kill the girl!"

She glanced hastily up at the casement from which the imprisoned villain's hand beckoned to some one in the distance; and then looked anxiously after her infant emissary. The little messenger held on his way unharmed, however; and she thought to herself that the alarm was a false one, raised to excite her fear and overcome her resolution. Just, however, as the child reached a hollow spot in the next field—the channel of a natural drain, then dry with the heats of summer—she saw another ruffian start up from the bed of the drain, and, catching him in his arms, hasten towards the mill, in accordance with the directions of his accomplice. In a moment she perceived her danger; and, in a moment more, she formed her future plan of proceeding. Retreating into the mill, she double locked and bolted the door,—the only apparent entrance to the edifice, every other means of obvious access to the interior being barred by means of strong iron gratings fixed against all the windows; and then took her post at an upper casement, determined to await patiently either her master's return, and her consequent delivery from that dangerous position, or her own death, if it were inevitable.

"Never," said she to herself; "never shall I leave my

all the while. In the mean time, the wheel went round and round with its steady, unceasing motion; and round and round went the ruffian along with it, steadily and unceasingly, too. In vain did he promise the stout-hearted girl to work her no harm; in vain did he implore her pity on his helpless condition; in vain did he pray to all the powers of heaven, and adjure all the powers of hell to his aid. She would not hear nor heed him; and, unheard and unheeded of them likewise, muttering curses, he was whirled round, and round, and round, in the untiring wheel, until, at last, feeling and perception failed him, and he saw and heard no more. He fell senseless on the bottom of the engine; but even then his inanimate body continued to be whirled round, and round, and round, as before; the brave girl not daring to trust to appearances, in connexion with such a villain, and being, therefore, afraid to suspend the working of the machinery, or stop the mill-gear and tackle from running at their fullest speed.

A loud knocking at the door was shortly after heard, and she hastened thither. It was her master and his family, accompanied by several of their neighbours. The unaccustomed appearance of the mill-sails in full swing on the Sunday, had, as she anticipated, attracted their attention; and they had hastened home from church for the purpose of ascertaining the cause of the phenomenon. The father bore his little boy in his arms; he had cut the cords wherewith the child was tied; but he was unable to obtain any account of the extraordinary circumstances that had occurred from the affrighted innocent.

Hännchen, in a few words, told all; and then the spirit which had sustained her so long and so well while the emergency lasted, forsook her at once as it passed away. She fell senseless into the arms of the miller's eldest son, and was with great difficulty recovered.

The machinery of the mill was at once stopped, and the inanimate ruffian dragged forth from the great wheel. The other ruffian was brought down from his prison. Both were then bound, and sent off to Bonn under a strong escort; and, in due course, came under the hands of the town executioner.

It was not long till Hännchen became a bride. The bridegroom was the miller's son, who had loved her long and well;

but with a passion previously unrequited. They lived thenceforward happily together for many years; and died at a good old age, surrounded by a flourishing family. To the latest hour of her life, this brave-hearted woman would shudder as she told the tale of her danger and her deliverance.

RHEIDT.

THE DEPARTED.

“There are certain things,” says a travelled writer,* “connected with the social state, which never grow greater and never grow less, but remain like rocks, if untouched, in the centre of surrounding increase and activity.” One of these stationary anomalies is the tiny hamlet of Rheidt, on the right bank of the Rhine, between Cologne and Bonn, but on the opposite side of the stream. For aught that history saith to the contrary, this little spot may have existed in the time of Charlemagne; and legendary lore, if credible, would establish its antiquity as far back as the days of Conrad the Third, the hero of the second crusade, at the very least. It is not, however, for its antiquity, neither is it for its past or present importance, that mention is made of it in these pages, but because it is connected with one of those wild and wondrous traditions which abound on the banks of this beautiful river, and make every spot on its shores hallowed to the genius of romance.

It was, according to the legend, in the days of German might and German honesty, when Conrad the Third had departed for the Holy Land with the flower of the Teutonic chivalry, that the aged lord of the hamlet of Rheidt, who was disabled from following his prince, lingered out the few remaining years of his life in the bosom of his friends, and amidst those scenes which the recollections of his youth, as well as their own surpassing loveliness, had endeared to his heart. He was named Ulrich von Rheidt; and had been a great warrior in days when every serf was a hero.

* George St. George, “A Pedestrian Saunter in Belgium in the Summer of 1835,” p. 289. Westley and Co. Piccadilly.

In his home dwelt a youth, who was not his son ; who was not his nephew ; who was not his relation by consanguinity in the remotest degree, if he were himself to be believed : but who was as like him as one being could possibly be to another notwithstanding ; and whom he loved with the love of a father for an only child — the hope of his age — fondly, tenderly, intensely, and passionately. Of all the sons and daughters of beauty who had grown up around the old sire like so many young trees, in the pride and glory of their strength and their power, not one survived ; they had fallen off, even as the withered leaves in October winds, and he was left

“ ————— like one
Who treads alone
Some banquet-hall deserted ;
Whose lights are fled,
Whose garland's dead,
And all but him departed.”

It was generally said that he took this youth all the closer to his heart, as his own children passed away from him : but those who knew the aged knight well, affirmed that he had loved him as fondly before their death as he had done subsequently ; and that he could never love him more than he did on the first night that he was brought to his door, by whom, or by what means, no one could ever after discover.

It was on a Friday evening, in early autumn. This youth, whose name was Hermann, had gone forth early in the morning into the wood which then skirted the shores of the river, and stretched almost from the Westphalian forest to the water's edge, to hunt the wild boar. He was on his return homewards. The proceeds of the day's sport had been despatched before him to Rheidt : his attendants had borne it thither, and he was left entirely alone. He was, however, accustomed to the intricacies of the forest from childhood, and he therefore felt no fear or anxiety. As the sun declined in the west, shedding his masses of golden radiance on the thick foliage of the trees, which transmitted it through their intertwisted boughs, and reflected it from their green leaves in the most fantastic forms and resplendent hues, fatigue began to make itself felt by him ; and perceiving, by the position of that luminary in the heavens, that he had suf-

ficient time to rest ere the night fell, he sat himself down on a bit of verdant, velvet sward, which circled the bole of a huge chestnut-tree, a father of the forest, perhaps one of those which sprang up in the primeval time when the waters of the deluge had subsided, and left the face of the earth dry.

He thought only to rest his tired limbs ; but he soon felt the pinions of slumber wave heavily over him. In a little time he was in a deep sleep, and the night came and shadowed the earth with her ebon wings, wholly unperceived of him, so sound was his repose. The hours fled, but he took no note of them ; the night waned, but he took no thought of time. He slept the sleep of youth and innocence, and freedom from care—deep, dense, and undisturbed. Why should sin and sorrow ever break man's rest ; and why should man ever make himself their voluntary victim ?

It was midnight when he awoke ; at least he felt conscious that it must have been so, for he had only taken his accustomed quantity of rest, and he seldom knew himself to exceed it under any circumstances. But such a midnight he had never before witnessed. It was light as day—as broad day ; but the sky was black above, and there was neither sun, nor moon, nor stars visible in it. The light was every where, for the trees cast no shadows from bole or bough ; yet could he not discover from whence it came, or how it originated. He sat up ; could it be a dream ? He rubbed his eyes ; he felt that he was awake. He clapped his hands ; there was no mistaking the completeness of his consciousness. The most extraordinary circumstance of all, however, was, that though he felt wonder he knew no fear : and though he was fully satisfied that the whole appearance which presented itself to his view was not in nature, yet his senses received no shock, but preserved their integrity, free, pure, and unqualified.

He sat up where he had lain, on the soft, short, green sward at the foot of that aged tree, and mused on his situation. As he sat, however, he became aware of a supernatural presence, and a change came over the sensations of his soul. In the sublime words of inspiration, " Fear came upon him and trembling, which made all his bones to shake ;" and he felt " that a spirit passed before his face : " for " the hair of his flesh stood up."

He had not been long thus, when a knight, and a "ladye of high degree," rode forth from the thickest part of the forest, and paced slowly past him. The knight was armed *cap-à-pié*, in armour of a fashion long disused; but his visor was up, and his visage could be seen. It was a sight which struck the heart of the youth with sadness, and made him most melancholy: pain, and guilt, and crime, and all their doleful consequences, were painted legibly on the collapsed cheek, and on the corrugated brow; while over all their traits was shed the lurid hue of leaden-eyed despair. His armour was black, and his plume was black, and his steed was coal-black too; but his face was pale—deadly pale. It was the face of a buried corpse, and Hermann felt within himself that he who wore it was one of the dead. The ladye was garbed in antique guise also; and very fair was she to look on; but her traits likewise wore the same imprint of sin, and shame, and sorrow, as those of her companion; and her countenance, too, was that of a corpse.

Hermann had heard, among the old people of the hamlet, that the dead should never be permitted to pass ungreeted, and he spake to the sad and solemn twain accordingly, as they paced slowly past him.

"Fair fall ye, gentles:" 'twas thus he spake. "I give ye good greeting. Whither ride ye?"

But they passed him without answer, or seeming at all aware of his presence; and they were soon lost to his view on the opposite side, amidst the dense foliage of the forest.

"Dead or alive," said the youth to himself, speaking aloud at the same time. "Dead or alive, ye be but ill-mannered folk to return not my salutation."

Even as he spoke, a hollow sound boomed through the solitude of the night, and struck on his ear like a voice of reprehension from the heavens. In another moment a second couple made their appearance. Similar to the preceding, they were mounted on black steeds, and garbed in black also; but the fashion of their garments was of a less antique character than that of those whom they followed. They came from the same quarter, however, and bore the same signs of suffering on their visages; so that it was evident to Hermann, that all had the same end, and were each on the same errand.

“ I greet ye, gentles,” spake the youth again, undeterred by the taciturnity of the former twain. “ Fair journey, and speed ! Whither ride ye ? ”

He received no reply, however ; and the doleful couple were soon hidden from his view.

Once more did he soliloquise in anger at their want of courtesy ; and once more did the warning sound from the depths of the forest silence him. It was strange that he never once felt fear of the possible consequences of his temerity, and never once thought of invoking the aid of God in his perilous situation ; but sat, still and stirless, as one predestined to perform a task, which he nor wills, nor knows, nor thinks to accomplish—the passive, unresisting agent of a superior power.

As he sat, however, couple after couple emerged from the same portion of the forest as those which had previously passed, all bearing the like unequivocal marks of death and condemnation about them, and all equally sad and silent as their predecessors, until full five hundred of each sex had rode before him. He remarked, as they rode by, that the fashion of their arms and armour, and of the ladies’ garments also, changed in every succeeding pair, until the last were almost identical with that of the time being. Their steeds, however, seemed all of the same stock—black, sleek, and lithe-limbed, but with an eye which flashed fire, and nostrils, whence reeked forth a thick, suffocating, dark-coloured smoke, which fouled the air they breathed.

The last of the line was a solitary ladye ; she was quite alone. No one was with her—none of her companions were in sight : she seemed very—very sorrowful. As she rode past the youth, he greeted her as he did the others ; but the greeting he gave to her was less involuntary than that which he offered to them, for she was “ beautiful exceedingly,” and looked like one “ more sinned against than sinning.”

“ I greet ye, fair ladye,” he said, rising from the seat, to which he had been as it were fixed till then, by some supernatural power. Approaching her horse’s head, he asked, “ Whither so late ; and why alone i’ the night in this forest ? ”

She looked at him, and that look sank deep into his heart ;

she was so young, so lovely, and seemed so full of sorrow : but she answered him not at all.

“ Well ! well ! ” he continued, “ as ye will not speak, I cannot compel ye ; so, God speed you on your way.”

The name of God seemed to have a miraculous effect upon the ladye, and also upon her steed. The latter stood still, his limbs quivering, his nostrils dilated, his eyes fixed and sunken, sweating at every pore, and shaking like an aspen in a brisk breeze ; the former for a moment cast the cloud of sorrow from her faded brow, and looked as pure as she was surpassingly beautiful.

“ God be praised for the word ! ” she exclaimed, clasping her little white hands together in the attitude of fervent prayer, and raising her tearful eyes to the heavens. “ God be praised ! It is long since I heard that holy name ! And now, fair youth, I may hold brief converse with thee ; the spell is broken for a while. Speak, what would you ? ”

Hermann was glad to hear the name of God reciprocated by his companion in that lonely wood ; for he knew well that it was only used by the justified, or by those for whom there was yet hope, among the spirits of the other world ; and he felt a full confidence in her good disposition, by reason of the kindly manner of her reply, as well as of the piety of her ejaculation. With this feeling he proceeded to question her respecting her predecessors.

“ And why,” quoth he, “ did none of them return my greeting but you ? or say me nay an they could not return it ? Why not even notice it by a nod or a gesture ? ”

“ Be satisfied,” replied she, “ with what you hear : we greet not all ; the dead never greet : we are of the dead.”

Now, although Hermann had a full and complete consciousness that the procession he had witnessed was a supernatural one, and the actors in it beings of another world—nay, though he was convinced from the beginning, intuitively as it were, that his companion was a disembodied spirit, yet he felt no fear like that which fell on him when she told him so with her own mouth, in the hollow accents of the grave. It made him silent for some moments, during which time the dead ladye looked on

him compassionately, but still with the sad and kindly aspect which first won his heart to her. He soon, however, recovered himself, and pursued his interrogatories.

"But if you be dead," inquired he, his mind naturally connecting what she had told him with the appearances which her person presented to his view; "if you be dead, as you say, how comes it that your lips are so red, and your eyes so bright? How is it that the rose still dwells on your cheek, and that you look rather like beauty awakened from a sweet sleep, than beauty which has been long buried in death and darkness?"

"One-and-twenty years has my body been dust and ashes," spake she solemnly; "one-and-twenty years has my soul suffered the pains of purgatory. Dool and dread it has been my lot to dree during that dreary time: long, and lone, and sad, I fear, is still to be the period of my punishment. But God be praised that apportioned me no worse, for my sins were many and very great."

Hermann looked on her with that degree of awe and surprise which a youth may be reasonably supposed to experience, at sight of a supernatural being; and she looked on him with increasing good-will, as it would seem, from the expression of her gentle countenance.

"And how comes it," again he asked, with the curiosity and fearlessness incident to his age; "how comes it that, of all this troop, you ride alone?"

The lady sighed as he spoke, and cast down her eyes while she answered,

"It is because he who was my companion in sin has not yet become my companion in sorrow: he still lives. Would to God that I could induce him to repent of his misdeeds ere he dies!"

Again she sighed deeply, and cast her eyes up to heaven, muttering an invocation, it would appear, to that omnipotent power whose mercy is boundless as his might, and whose goodness endureth for ever. The youth was silent for a moment: he then spake.

"But, whither go ye the night? and why this cavalcade through the forest?—may I know?"

"You may!" she replied: "it was God prompted you to put the question. Get up behind me on this steed. Fear

naught. Ask what you list, so it be not idle. But, above all, heed to do as I bid ye."

He waited not a second invitation, but sprang on the crupper of the dark and fiery animal which bore her. In a few moments they had left the scene of their conversation, and entered the depths of the forest; and in a few more they had reached the rear of the unearthly procession.

It seemed to Hermann that they might have been riding in this manner for something like an hour, when the head of the ghastly cavalcade entered a large circular space in the wood, which was entirely cleared of trees, and took up their position in the centre of it. The others followed, and ranged themselves around in regular order. Each knight assisted his ladye to dismount; and Hermann proffered the same courtesy to his companion: but she beckoned him back hastily, and, springing from her horse without his aid, motioned him to follow her. The horses, in the meanwhile, had disappeared in the under-wood of the forest, from whence immediately emerged as many servitors, garbed in the dress of the menials of those days, bearing with them every requisite for a sumptuous banquet. Knights and ladyes then wandered about for a brief space of time, until the preparations for feasting were completed. But there was no communion held by any of them with the others; nay, not even between the individuals of the same party in the procession; and they glided slowly and sadly each past each, like so many damned souls, bearing every one his separate hell in his own bosom.

Hermann followed the ladye, his friend and companion. They soon reached a remote corner of the melancholy wood. She then motioned him to sit down, taking up her own seat at some short distance from him.

"And now," she spake, breaking the sad silence which had prevailed up to that point of time, "mark well what I tell you; touch not any thing in this place—touch not even me. We must shortly take our seats at yon banquet, where every luxury of earth, and sea, and sky, will grace the board. But, mark well what I say, if you touch aught before you, there is scant hope of your life. You die."

The youth promised to obey her behest, and thanked her

warmly for her kindly caution. They then conversed together for some minutes longer. In the midst of their discourse a loud thunder-clap shook the earth, and a tumult of voices, like a rushing wind, reached the sequestered spot where they sat.

"We must now to the banquet," spake the ladye, rising from the sward; "that is the signal. Alas! alas! we must all obey it. Come, follow close, and be sure to keep near me."

They approached the arena. It was completely changed from what it had seemed to the youth, though only a few moments had elapsed since he saw it previously. The green turf was spread with a cloth of most wonderful dimensions and transcendant whiteness, which was covered with the choicest viands, contained in the richest vessels. Gold and silver were the plates, and vases, and drinking vessels; diamonds and precious stones of the greatest value, "pearls of price," rubies, amethysts, emeralds—all, in short, that was rare and costly among jewels—decorated their edges, or sparkled around their brims. The wine-butts, of which there was an abundance, were of the fairest ivory, hooped with gold; the wine-coolers were of the finest rock-crystal. Every thing was of the most magnificent description, yet over all there hung an air of gloom and desolateness which made the heart of the young man sink within him; in every countenance around him he saw reflected only misery and despair, instead of pleasure and gaiety. The same strange light that he had first seen in the forest, and which had accompanied the entire train on its course, still illumined the scene of revelry.

Another thunder-clap, or at least what seemed to his mind to be one, though he could not perceive whence it came, was heard, and the whole party ranged themselves standing round the board, if board it may be called. At a third they all sat them down on the sward, in the respective places they had taken. Hermann and his fair friend seated themselves at the bottom. The banquet then began, without prayer or grace said by any. It was evidently a most unholy feast, for none thanked the giver.

"Once more I warn you," whispered his companion to the youth; "once more I warn you to touch naught; be silent and discreet; watch me, and do as I direct you, and fear not."

He nodded his head in token of assent, and said nothing. At that instant one of the servitors — (there was only one behind him and his fair friend, whereas all the others had one behind each individual) — the servitor who waited on them brought up the first dish, and laid it before them.

“God help me!” ejaculated the ladye, in a whisper, “I must take of it.”

As she said this, she placed her finger on her lips, and shook her head sorrowfully at the youth: she then partook of the food set before her. It did not, after overhearing her words, much surprise Hermann to perceive that every bit she swallowed seemed to give her the greatest internal agony: neither, for the same reason, was he greatly astonished, on glancing rapidly around at the others of the company, to perceive the same cause produced a similar effect upon them. He motioned away the dish set before him; and he did the same with every other in succession, which the silent but officious menial brought to him in the course of the meal. The same also did he with the wines, as cup after cup of Johannisberger, Niersteiner, Rudesheimer, Assmanshauser, Liebfrauenmilch, and every other which that land of various nectar, the Rhine, produces, foamed up,

“In beaded bubbles to the brim,”

before him. He felt it, however, a harder task than he had first thought it to be. It was early morning when he had last broken bread; and the appetite of one in twenty can but scantily sustain eighteen hours’ abstinence: it cannot, therefore, be deemed extraordinary, if his teeth watered, and his lips smacked, for some of the savoury condiments and generous liquors which he saw in such tempting profusion before him. He passed through the severe ordeal, however, unscathed, and rose from the board as free from all participation in its luxurious fare as he had sat down to it.

“Now,” said his companion, the dead ladye, “follow me; you have done well and rightly.”

They stole again into the recesses of the forest, and there remained in renewed converse until again summoned to the arena they had left by a deep booming sound, like the voice of

an earthquake. Though but a very few moments absent, the youth perceived another change in its appearance, to the full as striking as the former. It now seemed sand—a dead sanded level—surrounded by strong palisadoes. Without this fence stood beside their steeds, armed to the teeth, with lance in rest and shield in hand, all the knights of the cavalcade and of the banquet. In a gallery erected at the further end of the list, were seated all the ladies, their companions.

“It is to be a tournay,” spake the friendly spirit to Hermann, ere she quitted him to take her place among those of her own sex in the enclosure; “take no part in it, I implore you!”

The youth bowed in reply; and then moved off to a position where he could see the several encounters to the greatest advantage.

The tilting commenced; and it was tilting in good earnest: all the fiends of hell seemed to be let loose on the spot, so savage and so fearful was the sport—so many demoniacal passions were exhibited by the actors in it. The knights jousted two and two first; and then the victors jousted in the same manner with one another, until one only was left undefeated in the field. As he rode about the lists he saw Hermann; and beckoned to some invisible being as he glanced grimly on the youth. In a moment a stalwart steed was beside the boy, fully caparisoned in every point, and arms and armour were borne to him by a lithe-limbed, handsome page, who stood suddenly before him. A hum of voices then arose around him; and it sounded in his ears as though he were reviled by the throng for his tardiness in accepting the challenge. His blood was up—he stretched forth his hand to grasp the morion with dancing white plumes, which was just then proffered to him by the obsequious page; but at that moment his eye caught the eye of the dead ladye, his friend and companion, and he drew back involuntarily, with a shudder of awe and dismay. The severity of her glance—the reproof it contained—the plain and distinct tale it told him of danger and destruction, of broken faith and forfeited plight—cooled the fever of his hot blood; and the sad, and sympathising expression of her gentle countenance, when she saw that her looks had produced the intended effect, at once restored him to self-possession. The offer of arms was promptly and sternly declined by him—

the snorting steed was waved off—and the service of the page was dispensed with. He had instant proof of the prudence of this course: for the arena in a moment more resounded with muttered curses of disappointment. A sad smile from his companion of the night, however, reassured him, and set his mind at rest. A *mêlée* then ensued; and, that over, in a few moments the lists were broken up. His fair friend once more joined him. All the others held on their separate, sad, and solitary courses; but he and she again sought the shadow and the silence of the wood.

They had sat together for some time, talking of various things, but especially of the affairs of the other world, when another singular sound, like to the voices of ten thousand bulls combined into one, boomed upon them.

“It is the last scene of the night,” spake the sorrowful ladye to Hermann, rising slowly as she said the words. “In a few moments more this mockery of mirth, which only aggravates our misery, will be over. But, oh, my son! I entreat you to be firm, and to stand fast against temptation, in the trial now before you. It will be the last: but it will be also the least resistible.”

Hermann assured her, by words as well as by looks, that he would abide by her counsel. They then returned to the open space in the forest, where they found the cavalcade—knights and dames—assembled. In a little minute they were all arranged in order for a dance; and in another moment they were flying off in every variety of evolution which a wild unearthly music, played by whom or where the youth could not discover, was calculated to create. Up and down, across and athwart, danced the mad-dened throng; but, though the music was most exciting, and their exultations superhuman, they all seemed quite spiritless in their movements. In fact, they danced like corpses, or rather like stone statues, rigid, erect, and without the semblance of life. It was a most extraordinary sight to see; and so the youth felt it to be: for he trembled as he looked on it, and perspired at every pore. But a change came over him. One of the dead dames—a ladye of most surpassing beauty—one

“ Whose face and form still wore that light
Which fleets not with the breath,
When life ne’er looks more purely bright
Than in the smile of death ! ”

bent before him, and beckoned him to join her in the mazy dance. Forgetful of the friendly caution of his companion—forgetful of the scenes he had witnessed—forgetful of the time, the place, the circumstances which surrounded him—the society into which he was cast—the awfulness of his situation—the enmity of his companions—and only remembering the fascinating smile of the beautiful being that floated away before him like a stately swan, he rushed forward, and caught her extended hand.

He did but touch it—the act was instantaneous and involuntary—yet such was the intensity of the pang which shot up his arm, and thence through every fibre of his heart, that sense and perception suddenly failed him, and he fell to the earth, lost to all consciousness.

When he recovered, he found himself extended on the sward in that part of the forest where he and his companion had been thrice before that night: while she was sitting close by his head, and hanging mournfully over him. He was still in deep agony. The pain that he felt was beyond any thing human—he deemed it a foretaste of the pains of hell: as it was in reality.

“You have slighted my warning,” spake the dead ladye solemnly, “you have suffered for your folly. But, it must not be. Hold forth your hand.”

He held forth his hand: she drew his hunting-knife from his girdle; and, having first dug up with it a small root, which she desired him to take in his mouth, she then cut him sharply over the palm, in the shape of a cross, until the blood flowed, thick and fast, from the incision. As each drop fell to the earth, he felt himself gradually grow less sensible of the mortal agony which had overpowered him; and when the wound ceased to bleed, he felt pain no longer. A sickly sensation was all that remained to tell him that he had suffered so much.

“And now,” continued his companion, “we must soon part. Yet, ere we go, I would fain speak to you of my own sin, and shame, and sorrow. ’Tis a sad story.”

Hermann hung down his head with the bashful feelings of a boy, to whom sin, and shame, and sorrow, are words of awful import, mysterious, dread, and undefined. His companion proceeded, hiding her face with her hands the while.

“ Even after life has ceased the affections survive, or I would not have watched so fondly over your welfare this night.”

The youth looked up amazed at the impassioned tone in which this was spoken, as much as at the purport of the speech itself.

“ Yes,” she continued, “ it is in vain to conceal it. I am your mother—your sinful mother!”

He would have caught her in his extended arms; but she shudderingly motioned him back.

“ Hear me,” she said, “ and interrupt me not, for my stay is but brief on this earth. He whom you live with is your father. He seduced my affections from my husband: I fixed them on him. I died in childbirth. You were the offspring of our shame, and my sin. I died, unshrived—I died the death of the wicked; but God has not altogether condemned me, for he saw that I repented me of my sins. Go to your father, and tell him from me, that, if he reform not his sinful ways, he will assuredly perish. Go, and bid him repent, while he has yet time to do so. Tell him that his days are numbered. Go, my son—my dear, dear child! Take warning by my fate, and avoid the path of sin: it leads but to perdition. Go!”

“ But,” asked the astounded youth, “ should he not believe me? Should he say I am an idle dreamer? Should he call me fool?”

“ Tell him,” she replied, “ that by the same token he first saw me in the absence of my husband, on a day in summer tide, in my own home, on which occasion he put a rich gold ring on the fore-finger of my right hand—tell him, that thrice afterwards did we meet in the churchyard of Rheidt—and tell him that, on my death-bed, I directed that ring to be placed under his pillow, which was done by a trusty friend. He now wears it on the same finger of the same hand. Go: and bless thee, my boy!—bless thee! bless thee!”

The youth bowed reverentially, in token of acquiescence.

“ Farewell!” she said, in a voice softened by sorrow, and which melted on his ear like the dying notes of an Eolian harp. “ Farewell! farewell!”

He raised his head. She was gone. He looked around him:

it was broad day. The sun was just tipping with his golden radiance the summits of the seven mountains; and the birds sang cheerily on the boughs and in the bushes to greet the arrival of morning. Another glance shewed him that he was in the churchyard of Rheidt, lying at full length on the tombstone of a certain noble dame who dwelt in the vicinity long before he was born, and whose fair fame her neighbours had spoken but slightly of during her lifetime.

He would have deemed all that had passed only a distempered dream, but for the monitor he bore about with him on the palm of his right hand, and the internal conviction he felt of the reality of the occurrence. His sire's abode was soon reached; and his heart, it is to be supposed, was speedily disburdened of its secret.

In a few weeks, father and son went forth from the mansion where the one had grown up in childish glee, and the other grown gray with the troubles of the world, never more to return to it. The one was borne to his last resting-place in the churchyard of Rheidt—the other joined the ranks of the Crusaders, and left his bones to bleach on the plains of Palestine.

Surely, such a consummation sufficiently authenticates the legend.

The simple dwellers on this shore of the river believe in its truth: why should self-seeking wisdom be sceptical?

Peace to the manes of the departed!

BERCHEM.

THE ONSLAUGHT.

As direct allusion has been made to Berchem, or Bergheim, in a former page,* in connexion with the history of Cologne, the following sketch of an occurrence which took place there may not be deemed altogether uninteresting or inappropriate here.

Emboldened by the successful issue of the affair of Westhofen,† the citizens of Cologne determined to attack their arch-

* Art. The Rath-Haus, *vide* p. 73.

† P. 107, *et supra*.

bishop, Conrad von Hochstetten, in his own camp. He then lay at Berchem, fortified, on the one point, by the old bed of the river Sieg, or Segus, and, on the other, by the best field-works which the military skill of the age could suggest. Though defeated, he was not dispirited : though roughly shaken, his strength was still unbroken : he was like a baffled lion in his lair, waiting to make another deadly spring. His opponents, however, anticipated him ; and, by so doing, disconcerted his entire plan of operation. It had never entered into his imagination that they would so far follow up their good fortune as to beard him in his own den : he deemed that they would have been satisfied with their unexpected success ; and he calculated upon catching them at the moment when, intoxicated with joy and unmanned by excess, they would, as he supposed, fall an easy prey to his forces. But he was miserably mistaken ; and he now had to defend himself, as well as he might, against a body of men loose and undisciplined, it is true, but animated with that irrepressible enthusiasm which overcomes all difficulties, when liberty is the object at stake.

The foe appeared before his entrenchments almost without his having had notice of their coming. He was literally taken by surprise. In front and in rear they attacked him ; and, while one division of the civic patricians, who had rode thither from Deutz, along the right shore of the Rhine, sustained by a large body of armed men a-foot, made several desperate attempts on the land-quarters of his camp, another division, accompanied in a similar manner, disembarked in full panoply, on the island of Pfaffenmutze, from a fleet of barques which, during the darkness of the night, had found their way thither, and took up their position on the Delta, or marshy bottom between the old and the new embouchures of the Sieg, which flanked that part of his entrenchment.

Their order of battle was soon formed. The knights set their lances in rest ; the foot-folk pressed forward to the bed of the river, for the purpose of facilitating the passage of the horses and their riders. On the other bank, however, a strong force awaited to receive them, under the command of Herman von Vittinghofen, the Archbishop's most trusty captain and especial favourite. The onslaught was dreadful. It was cool, determined courage on the one side — the courage of veterans, reck-

less of life at best, and knowing well that there would be no quarter given them if they were vanquished, aided by all the advantages of a strong position, and every resource of military skill — opposed to the fearless rush of a furious mob, led on by high blood, and its concomitants, indomitable spirit and tameless courage, animated with the enthusiasm of freedom, and possessing the endurance of martyrs. Skill and science were soon set at naught by the eager pedestrians. The bed of the Sieg was speedily rendered passable by their efforts and by their destruction. They brought earth in their hands to fill it up ; and their dead bodies helped to render it fordable when other filling was required. They fought like tigers at bay ; and so, likewise, did their opponents. The sluggish river was coloured with their blood ; it ran rapidly with this unwonted increase. They lay in its bottom, heaped to the verge of the banks on both sides. Now was the moment for the mounted men to come into action : they were not slow to advance on the foe. Twice five hundred lances were couched ; twice ten hundred heavy spurs were buried to the rowel-heads in their barbed steeds' bodies ; a thousand knights, of the best blood of proud Cologne, are borne forward ; " Hurrah for freedom ! " shouted twice a thousand voices. " Hurrah for freedom ! " flung back the shouts of as many more—their friends at the other side of the Archbishop's camp. They dash on—the edge of the Sieg is reached — God for the right !

" Nor honour nor reward be his who flies the fight this day ! " shouted a youth of the ancient race of the Leoparts, heading the squadron which rushed onward like the roaring wind. His gigantic steed's hoofs crash over the skulls and trunks of the dead and the dying ; he springs up on the bank at the other side ; he dashes into the thick of a forest of levelled lances ; fearfully fast and awfully crushing fall the strokes of the heavy bartisans upon his helm and cuirass ; a hundred spears are buried in his noble steed's breast. He staggers — he falls — his horse rolls over — he is hid from sight. It is done with him now. One of the bravest hearts in that brave band beats no more.

But was he unavenged ? No. The earth reeled with the shock, as the dense squadron of his friends and followers thundered after him, their long lances in rest, their strong steeds at full speed, scattering the line of their opponents like chaff before the wind. The foot-folk followed, filling up the breaches

made in the enemy's front only to level all around them the more effectually. The ground was quickly covered with the fallen, the dead, and the dying. High towering over all the other heaps of corpses which strewed the spot was seen one, piled to the very top with cleft skulls and headless trunks. On the summit of this human mound lay the young John von Leopart, the first in the onslaught, the bravest of the brave; his hand still grasping his sword; his helm clove to the neck; his bared countenance fierce to the last. He looked as if the spirit of freedom still lingered near the lifeless tenement, as though loath to quit so glorious a temple.

The battle now became a massacre rather than a fight. No quarter was asked—no quarter was given. Defeat and despair stalked around in their most hideous forms: death and slaughter hallooed on the victors. Night only put an end to the fearful scene.

The Archbishop, who, whatever his vices might have been, was not cursed with the curse of cowardice, had fought all day long with the greatest fury and desperation. His position in the field was denoted by the heaps of slain which surrounded him; two piles of dead bodies on either hand attested his prowess, and his skill in temporal arms. But even his valour would have been unavailing in a good cause, the disparity of numbers was so fearfully against him. What, then, could it effect in one, where he fought without the sustainment of a clear conscience or a pure intention, and in which to triumph would be but to commit a still greater crime? He was well supported by his friends and followers all through the fight; but now they became disheartened at the frightful carnage which had taken place among them. Availing themselves of the darkness and the confusion, they took to speedy flight, forcing him along with them; and, after enduring great danger, and overcoming many difficulties, they succeeded in reaching Bonn in safety by daybreak the following morning.

The citizens of Cologne, aware that they would have no chance of success in any attempt upon Bonn, and knowing that to follow their foe thither would be fruitless, first plundering the camp of the foe, and then setting it on fire, returned to their native city. The enemy were buried where they fell; but the bodies of their fellow-citizens—such, at least, as could be removed with propriety—were borne back to their native place in

barques set apart for the purpose. In the foremost of that funereal fleet was the body of the young, the dauntless, and the immortal John von Leopart.

The further events of the Archbishop's troubled career have been already related in the preceding pages of this work.

GRAU-RHEINDORF.

SISTER ELI.

The Sieg not only frequently overflows its banks, in consequence of a sudden accession of water from the mountains, but it also, sometimes, on such occasions, changes its course. The *embouchure* is therefore of a very marshy nature even at present,

notwithstanding all the care and cultivation bestowed on land in the vicinity of the Rhine. Formerly it was a dead swamp, overgrown with reeds and other aqueous vegetable productions. While in that state, it formed the scene of one of those wild legends current on the banks of this romantic river. The following is the popular version of the story.

The village of Grau-Rheindorf, on the opposite bank of the Rhine, was in days of yore the site of a celebrated nunnery, which has long since been secularised. The abbess was usually a noble lady; and the rules of the order, combined with the custom of the house, gave her a power little short of supreme over the nuns and novices under her superintendence.

It was in the middle of the thirteenth century, when this spiritual power was at its highest, that there dwelt in the convent a nun named Sister Eli, who was housekeeper to the abbess, and, of course, a person in the enjoyment of considerable authority; but she was also a very wicked woman, hard-hearted to the poor, ill-natured to the nuns, and unkind to every one. She drove the beggars from the gates with a whip; she stinted the sisterhood in their frugal fare; and she brought the pious abbess, who was a good, easy kind of person on the whole, when left to her own nature, into general disrepute. At length the reward of her evil life arrived: she fell sick and died. When the priest who attended her in her last moments saw that she lived no longer, he hastened to the abbess, to communicate to her the intelligence. In his way to her cell, he had to pass through the garden of the convent, where, to his horror and surprise, he saw perched in an apple-tree, with a green hat on her head, the very nun, Sister Eli, whose decease he had not five minutes before witnessed, and whose death-bed he had but that very moment left. When the abbess was informed of the circumstance, she summoned the sisterhood, and in fear and trembling they all proceeded to the cell of their departed sister. But there she lay, as when the old priest left her, calm, and still, and breathless. The body was borne to the charnel-house of the convent in due time, and there placed in the vault appropriated to it. From thenceforward, however, the convent knew neither peace nor quietness more. The moment the sisterhood closed their eyes in sleep, after their midnight orisons in the convent chapel were done, that moment the great bell of the convent began to toll, at

such a furious rate as to destroy all chance of rest during its continuance. This noise generally lasted until the hour of matins. A watch was set to find out the cause of the unwonted disturbance ; and it was discovered at once to be the ghost of Sister Eli, who seemed to delight in tormenting her sister nuns in death as well as in her lifetime. The cookmaids in the kitchen, the milkmaids in the dairy, the cowherds in their stalls, were daily tormented by her sudden and unexpected appearance among them, enveloped in her winding-sheet and grave-clothes, and wearing on her head the green hat which the pious old priest saw on her in the apple-tree in the garden, when she made her first ghostly appearance. She frightened all the labouring men in the service of the sisterhood nearly out of their senses. The woodcutters, the gardeners, and the farm-servants were equally obnoxious to her. She would flit before the eyes of the one, from tree to tree and from bough to bough, wherever they sought to fell a piece of timber for firewood for the convent : she would trample on all the plants of the other in the night, and turn up the soil in which they had sowed any thing during the day, so that the whole looked quite laid and destroyed in the morning, and all their worth went for nothing : and the third she would almost drive to madness, by sitting on the crupper of their horses, and preventing them from stirring through fear and anxiety, or otherwise frightening them so that they could be got to perform no labour, either by flogging, or by gentle treatment, or by any other means. At length she appeared to the ladye abbess in person ; and then, of course, some steps were at once taken to lay her troubled spirit. The abbess communicated the circumstances to the Archbishop of Cologne, and he summoned all the chief clergy of the diocess to the convent, for the purpose of exorcising the tormenting ghost of the departed nun. They assembled in full force in the chapel of the convent, on a near holiday. After a solemn high mass, the exorcism was proceeded with. As they proceeded, the sound of a discordant, unearthly voice, was heard above the deep chorus of the priests, and all in the chapel felt the presence of a being of the other world among them. The voice waxed louder and more inharmonious ; and the service was stopped, in consequence. The chapel

was at once searched. Under the altar-cloth was found a small boy concealed; he was quite naked, and, when discovered, was doubled up together like a sleeping dog. When asked why he came thither, he told them he was curious to know what they did; but when, at the command of the archbishop, they had put him forth from the chapel, they beheld in him, all of a sudden, the form and features of the deceased nun. After much trouble and great ceremony, it was at last suggested by the celebrated Albertus Magnus, who was of the clerical party present, that the body of Sister Eli should be disinterred, or rather removed, from the vaults of the convent chapel, and buried, without delay, in the swampy soil at the mouth of the Sieg, on the opposite side of the river. The suggestion was adopted without dissent, and put into execution without delay. From thenceforward the convent of Grau-Rheindorf was freed for ever from all further annoyance on the part of the wicked spirit of the dead nun.

Not so, however, with the neighbourhood of her new place of burial. Nightly was she to be seen sitting in the middle of the swamp at the central point, where the only two paths which led across it met together. There, from dusk to daybreak, did she await the unwary traveller, concealed from his sight by her black nun's garb, or by sitting amidst the tall reeds which covered the surface of the morass, that stretched wide around. At other times would she decoy the barque of the belated fisher, by her piteous cries and lamentations, to the perilous flats which surround the spot, and make it so dangerous to river mariners. The moment her victim passed the place of her concealment, she sprang on his shoulders like a tiger-cat, and urged him through bog and mire, swamp and slough, marsh and moor, until his exhausted strength finally gave way, or until the matin bell of the convent, or the crowing of the distant cock, announced the hour when all bad spirits are obliged to betake them to their darksome abodes in the other world.

At other times, she would take the shape of a boy — similar in appearance to him who was expelled the convent chapel by the exorcising priests — and practise the same fearful freaks.

On one occasion — it was a fine moonlight night — an industrious foreign artisan was on his way to Limperich, for the purpose of crossing the ferry to Bonn. As the waters had not

been out for some time, he thought he would take the path across the swamp, being told in the neighbourhood that it would considerably shorten his journey. He took it accordingly. Nothing occurred to him until he arrived at the crossing of the two paths: then he perceived a little boy, with a rude kind of backgammon board before him. The path was very narrow, and the boy and the board were more than sufficient to occupy it.

"Let me pass, boy," said the traveller; "it is not fit that you should be here so late in the night. Put up your play and go home—quick!"

The boy appeared not to hear him; or, if he did, he certainly did not heed him. The artisan repeated his observations—the boy paid as little attention to him as before. Tired with the delay, irritated at the obstinacy of the imp, and fearful that the last boat would have left for Bonn before he reached Limperich, he attempted to leap over the boy and the board, which obstructed his path; but in so doing he accidentally struck the latter with his foot, and knocked the pieces about the roadway in great confusion.

"You will pay for this," said the boy; "my mammy will make you rue it."

The traveller laughed at the threat of the child, and hurried on his road, glad to get rid of him so easily. He had, however, scarcely gone ten steps, when the spirit of the swamp, the fearful Sister Eli of Grau-Rheindorf convent, suddenly sprang upon his shoulders, and clasping his neck with her cold, clammy hands, goaded him about until morning. It was with difficulty he reached Bonn by noon the next day; and he died there the same night, of the fright and the fatigue he had undergone.

A thousand similar tales are told of her tricks upon travellers; but she has never been authentically heard of since the Dutch built the fortress called Pfaffenmutze (The Parson's Cap), on the scene of her exploits, in 1620. There was a slight rumour of her re-appearance, however, on the capture of the fort and island by the Spaniards two years afterwards (A.D. 1622), but it died away with their disappearance from that part of the Rhine.

People pass the spot now, as they would pass any other spot

like it, without fear or dread of any supernatural agency, more than their own natural weakness or their early education inspires in their minds.

VILLICH.

HARMONY RESTORED.

Villich, in former times called Velike, once a celebrated nunnery for noble ladies, was founded by Megingoz, Count of Gueldres (A.D. 985), and his spouse Gerberg, daughter of Godfrey, Count of the Ardennes, an ancestor of Godfrey of Boulogne, and placed by them under the Benedictine rule. The discipline of this convent was very strict; and it existed in great repute from the time of its foundation, through all the troubles that afflicted Germany, and shook Europe to the very centre, until a very recent period.

Among the many legends to which the locality gave rise, is one of the pious Adelheid, daughter of the founder, who became, it is said, abbess of the convent immediately after her mother's death. An agreeable authoress, to whose elegant work* reference will be more than once made in future pages, has versified the miracle, for such is the character of this tradition. A free translation is subjoined:—

Once knelt the holy Adelheid
At Villich, in the choir;
But as she sang, a shrilly scream
Made her well-nigh expire.

A young nun's note thus rent her ear:
She glanced upon the maid,
With anger in her pious eye,
Yet seemed this not afraid.

Nor feared she aught—for naught she saw;—
Her gaze was fixed upon
The face of one who loved her well
In days that were a-gone.

* Rheinischer Sagen-Kreis. Ein Cyclus von Romanzen Balladen und Legenden des Rhems. Von Adelheid von Stotterfoth Stifts-Dame. Frankfurt am Main. C. Jügel, 1835.

Seven weary years and better, she
 Had wept his loss full sore :
 And now to see him live and breathe,
 When hope for her was o'er.

He stood within the sunny ray,
 The beams fell on his head ;
 " 'Tis he ! 'tis he ! ah, lack-a-day !
 How long I deemed him dead."

Her senses fly—her voice grows shrill—
 Her song is but a scream ;
 She could not sing the sacred chant,
 But shrieked as in a dream.

The abbess looked in wrathful mood,
 She raised her holy hand,
 And smote her on the cheek and ear ;
 None might such stroke withstand.

And, lo ! a miracle ! The maid
 Casts down her shameful eyes ;
 Then raised her song in sweet accord,
 To all the nuns' surprise.

These were the good old times, when, as the French retailer of the tradition observes, "*Quelques soufflets bien appliqués,*" could produce such accord. Now-a-days, it is to be feared, that a similar application would have only a contrary effect, and that there would be an aggravation of the discord, in place of an increase of the harmony.

SCHWARTZ-RHEINDORF.

GOD'S JUDGMENT AGAINST GLUTTONY.

On the right bank of the Rhine, a little below Bonn, lies the little village and convent of Schwartz-Rheindorf. The village still exists, and the church of the foundation yet stands, as in days of yore, but all the dwellers in the convent have departed. It was some time since secularised.

The convent was founded in the year of our Lord 1152, by the Archbishop of Cologne, Arnold Graf von Wied, for the

reception of noble ladies alone ; and was placed by him under the strict rule of St. Benedict. This prelate, who died in the year 1159, just seven years afterwards, lies buried beneath the high altar of the church.

The church itself is a beautiful structure, and, according to the best authorities on such subjects, one of the purest specimens of the Byzantine-Gothic style of architecture extant in Germany.

Of the many legends connected with this ancient foundation, one is selected for its antiquity. It relates to a very remote period of the history of the convent, and may be as old as the twelfth century. Its structure and internal evidence go far to prove its venerable age. It runs nearly thus in the original:—

Among the many other rights and privileges conferred on the Convent of Noble Ladies at Schwartz-Rheindorf, by the pious Bishop of Cologne, Arnold Graf von Wied, was the right of fishing in the river, within certain limits above and below its territorial boundaries. This was a most profitable right for a long period of time, but they were subsequently deprived of it by the interposition of Providence, as a punishment for their gluttony ; which shall be seen in the sequel of this story.

The certainty of a fortunate fishing was always denoted by the appearance of two immense sturgeon. They came at the commencement of each year—harbingers of good luck—and they were ever succeeded by shoals of river fish, in such numbers as to be absolutely inexhaustible until the expiration of the season. Of these sturgeon, the one, a huge male, always allowed himself to be taken by the fishermen, but the female was never captured. It was understood by those who knew all about these matters, that on her freedom depended their success. This luck lasted for centuries.

It was, however, remarked, that as the discipline of the convent became more and more relaxed, and the grace of God grew to be less and lesser among its inmates, the fishing became more and more unprofitable. The sturgeon, it is true, still made their appearance, but they were spent and thin, and altogether unlike those which had been wont of yore to visit the fishing-ground of the sisterhood. The abbess and the nuns, however, either could not, or would not, perceive the cause of the falling-off in the take,

or the change in the appearance of the sturgeon; indeed, it would have been to expect too much of human nature—and that nature female, too—to suppose that, how convinced soever they might be of their own errors, they would acknowledge them. But the common people in the vicinity of the convent, and especially those poor persons to whom the river had been heretofore a source of support, were neither slow in seeing the cause, nor in publishing the consequences to the world. Thus stood matters at the time referred to by this tradition: dissoluteness of life on the one hand, distress on the other; conjoined profligacy and poverty; extravagance and starvation, linked inseparably together.

The old year had passed away, and the new year had begun. It was mid-winter. On the shores of the river stood the purveyor of the convent, accompanied by the ladye abbess in person, and a great number of her nuns. They waited to watch the first haul made by the fishermen on the new year's morning, according to the custom which had prevailed in the convent for centuries. It was not usual for the river to be open at that season; but at this time there was not a bit of ice on its surface. The fishermen put out in their boats, and cast their large nets into the current; then, making the circuit of the spot, they returned to the bank, and commenced to haul them in. Little difficulty was experienced by them in this operation; for several years preceding, the supply of fish had scarcely sufficed to defray the expense of catching. Still, however, the convent would not relinquish the right, or allow the claim they had to the exclusive possession of this part of the stream, and all it contained, to become dormant; but went on enforcing the one, and asserting the other, from year to year, even at a manifest disadvantage, and a great comparative loss. It would seem, however, that fortune was half-inclined to smile on the sisterhood once more. The nets had not been more than half drawn in, when the fishermen began to perceive that they contained something heavier than usual. The ladye abbess and the nuns were made acquainted with the circumstance; and they watched, in eager gleesomeness, the landing of their contents. The nets were at length hauled on shore, with much trouble and considerable toil.

"Hilloa!" said the principal boatman, an aged mariner, to the purveyor of the convent, "hast thou ever seen such monsters before? My soul! but this will glad the hearts of the whole convent, and make many a poor man happy, an it be but the harbinger of old times, long since departed, as it now needs to be."

Even while he spake thus, two immense sturgeon were landed. The abbess and her train approached the landing-place, and admired the size, and strength, and superior condition of the royal fish.

"It were but a folly to set one of them free," she partially soliloquised, and partially spake to the purveyor of the convent, who stood close by her side. "A folly, and an encouragement to idle superstition! Besides, the convent has not had such a treat these years past, and we absolutely require some change; the river fish grows so tiresome to eat of for a long time, and there have not been more than six sorts this week. Yes! yes! we want a change, and this is just the thing. And then they are so large, and in such capital condition! I'll warrant me, they'll eat delightfully."

The purveyor, a wily, Jewish-looking fellow, who, in those days of intolerance, passed for an Italian—for even then that nation was famous for supplying supple menials to Northern Europe—at once assented to the observations of his mistress, and added not a few of his own in support of them. Not so, however, the old fisherman, who was privy to the conversation, having approached the ladye abbess, in company with the purveyor, to learn her sovereign will and pleasure as to the disposal of his capture.

"Nay, nay, Master Judas," he interposed, in his rough manner, "not so fast—not so fast. My father fished on this river for full fifty years, and my father's father did the same: fifty years was his father a fisherman on this spot before him, and fifty years have I drawn net here too—all in the service of the noble ladies of Schwartz-Rheindorf. But never, in that time, knew I other than this done with these fish—the one to be let free, the other to be given away among the poor, in the name of God and of the holy Virgin. I'll do naught else with them."

"The abbess and the purveyor were but ill-pleased to hear what the old man said; for the one had set her mind on the

dainty fish, and the other hated every one that made the most remote allusion to his doubtful origin.

"You must do as I bid you, Herman," spake the former, in a dignified manner.

"You must obey my ladye your mistress," echoed the latter ; "she is too good and too gracious to ye!"

"Not I," quoth the old man, bluntly ; "not I. For all the broad lands on the Rhine I would not have hand, act, or part in such a proceeding. Do as ye list ; but I'll be none of your servant in the matter."

The old man walked away as he said the words ; and neither the intreaties of the abbess, the threats of the purveyor, nor the interposition of the nuns present, could bring him back.

Others, however, were soon found among the fishermen, his companions, who were less scrupulous or less intractable ; and the two fish were accordingly removed to the convent, and consigned to the care of the cook, to be served up for dinner that day.

The dinner-hour arrived—the sisterhood were all seated at table—the servitors, marshalled by the supple purveyor, made their appearance, bearing the expected banquet in large covered dishes. A hasty grace was muttered ; and then every eye was turned to the concealed delicacy before them. The ladye abbess had ordered the sturgeon to be served up first ; dispensing, for that day, with the eternal soup which always precedes German entertainments.

"And now, sisters," she said, with a most complacent look, which was intended for the *beau idéal* of benignant condescension, "I should like to know how you approve of our dinner ? It is my constant study to make you all happy ; and my efforts are unceasing to afford you every gratification in my power. Let us begin !"

The covers were removed in a twinkling, by the expert menial crew ; the carvers clattered their knives and forks impatiently ; but, lo and behold ! every dish on the table was cold and empty. The wrath of the abbess rose at the sight ; the zeal of the nuns knew no bounds in seconding her indignation. The cook was sent for. He stood before the excited sisterhood

an abject, trembling wretch ; far more like to one who expects to be made a victim of himself, than one who had voluntarily made a victim of others.

"How is this, villain?" exclaimed the ladye abbess, her face reddening with rage.

"How's this, villain?" shrieked threescore female voices, in various keys—none of them musical.

"Ay, how is this, hound?" growled the purveyor.

"Do you mock us?" continued the ladye abbess ; her ample form inflating with fury.

"Do you mean to make a mock of us?" echoed the sisterhood, in shriller and more discordant tones than before.

"Do you mock us?" re-echoed the purveyor, with a simulated dignity, which sat most ludicrously on his mean, Jewish figure and countenance.

"Wretch!" shrieked the abbess, altogether losing herself in her ire ; "let me tear his eyes out."

"Tear his eyes out ! tear his eyes out !" re-echoed the furies who flocked around him.

"First let him speak," interposed the purveyor.

Even though they were women, the enraged throng had sufficient sense left to perceive the propriety of the suggestion, and to act accordingly. The abbess was the first to recover her self-possession ; and her equanimity was speedily imitated by the obsequious sisterhood. The miserable cook was then called on to explain the cause of the apparent outrage on their feelings.

He had nothing, however, to say on the subject, further than that he had cut up and cooked the sturgeon, according to the directions he had received from the purveyor ; and that, when dinner was served up, he had sent them up dressed as he had been directed to do by that official.

The abbess and the nuns were quite puzzled how to explain this extraordinary occurrence ; and each busied herself in conjectures which, as usual in such cases, never approached the fact. At this juncture the aged fisherman stood before them.

"My ladye," he said, addressing the abbess, "it is a judgment of God. Even now I saw the fish in the river ; I knew

them well; and I'll swear to them if necessary. They floated away in triumph, swimming down with the stream; and I be a much mistaken man if ever ye see them more!"

The pleasurable anticipations of that day were completely spoiled to the sisterhood; but it would be well for them if the consequences of their avarice and gluttony ended with the hour. Never more did the sturgeon make their annual appearance; and the part of the stream which pertained to the convent, thenceforth, ceased to produce fish of any kind whatsoever.

The words of the aged fisherman were but too true. It was a judgment against the convent, for the abandoned appetite of its inmates.

People say that the reformation had the effect of wooing the finny tribe back to their old haunts. At all events, whatever may have been the cause, it is the fact, that there is not at present a less plentiful supply in this spot than there is in any other part of that rich river.

Pass we now to Bonn. The vicinity of civilisation has rendered the intervenient portion of the Rhine and its shores barren of wonders; and no legend, tradition, or history exists, to connect with the locality.

BONN.

"Bonna solum felix, celebris locus, incluta tellus,
Florida martyrio, terra sacrata Deo—
Eulibus requies, asylum mite fuisti
Semper, et externi te reparare suam."

Bonn is one of the oldest cities on the shores of the Rhine. It was first a camp of the *Ubii*, and was then known as *Ara Ubiorum*. Mercury was worshipped there with great state. On the coming of the Romans, it was converted into one of the strong field-settlements of that all-conquering people. During the early period of their dominion, it bore the names of *Verona* and *Bonna*, or rather *Bonnensia Castra*, from the sixteenth legion which lay there intrenched for a considerable period.

Bonn was subsequently the site of one of the fifty castles built by Drusus Germanicus, along the shores of the river, to overawe the barbarians. Tradition states that this hero built a bridge there, to unite the Roman territories on both sides of the Rhine; but there is no mention made of the fact in authentic

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history, and no remnant of such a structure now exists to corroborate the tradition.

The Christian religion is said to have been preached in Bonn, by the Apocryphal Saint Maternus, in the first and second centuries after Christ; but of this allegation, also, there is not any thing like historical proof. It may suit the patriotism of local antiquaries, to make their city as early a convert to the true faith as the centre of Christianity itself; but to adopt their prejudiced opinions, were only to be wilfully misled. The Christian creed, there is every reason to believe, was not generally known on any part of the Rhine until the latter end of the fourth century; and the most incontrovertible authorities fix its propagation as the acts of the Irish missionaries, Fridolin and Boniface.

It is to be presumed, that the original nucleus of the city of Bonn was the Castle of Drusus Germanicus, for the Camp of the Ubii can scarcely be so deemed. The advantageous situation of the place, however, recommended it, in process of time, to the masters of the world; and it became, in consequence, very early in the Christian era, of considerable importance among the colonial cities of the Roman empire.

Bonn suffered severely, in common with all the Roman possessions on the Rhine, during the latter period of the reign of Constantius (A.D. 350–359). It fell a prey to the barbarous Alemanni, in their several invasions of Gaul; and was more than once reduced to a heap of smoking ruins by those abhorers of the restraints of walls and houses. But Julian the Apostate, after his third successful campaign against them, reconstructed the fortifications, and re-edified its public structures, and Bonn was soon raised to a more flourishing condition than ever.

The history of the city for some centuries subsequently is very obscure. It is only known with certainty that it was thrice destroyed by the Normans, in their incursions on the kingdom of the Franks, about the latter end of the ninth century.

In the year 921, Bonn was the scene of an interview between Henry the Fowler, Emperor of Germany, and Charles the Simple, King of France; and there, also, that memorable alliance was concluded, which subjected the weak-minded French

monarch as a vassal to his strong-minded imperial brother. This interview took place in the middle of the Rhine, opposite the centre of the city. Bonn was also the seat of a great council of the church, A.D. 942 ; from whence, however, nothing memorable emanated.

Conrad von Hochstetten, Archbishop of Cologne, so frequently alluded to in these pages, was the first of the spiritual princes of that arch-diocese who took up his abode in Bonn. He strengthened the fortifications, concentrated all his forces in the city and its neighbourhood, formed an extensive dépôt of arms and munitions of warfare within its walls, and, finally, established his court there. Succeeding electors followed his example ; and, from the beginning of the thirteenth century, to the annexation of the electorate of Cologne to the kingdom of Prussia, in the early part of the nineteenth, Bonn was the seat of the electoral power, the residence of the elector himself, and the capital of the spiritual and temporal principality.

For this reason, when almost every other city on the Rhine was democratic in its institutions, those of Bonn were still purely monarchical. In the struggles of the citizens of Cologne for self-government, the citizens of Bonn felt no sympathy ; and they took no part in the various quarrels between the archbishop and his subjects, except against the latter. The citizens of Bonn willingly afforded refuge and assistance to the archbishops, on all occasions of distress or defeat by their turbulent brethren of Cologne ; and these princes endowed them, from time to time, with the greatest privileges, in requital for their fidelity. In Cologne, the archbishops were hated at all times, and only feared when they had sufficient power to make themselves masters of the city ; in Bonn, on the contrary, whether powerful or powerless, " through good and through evil report," they were uniformly beloved, as fathers and as friends. This was the cause of great animosity between the citizens of both cities ; and, in the course of time, it led to much strife, and many other most serious consequences.

It was from Bonn, in the rule of Engelbert, the second archbishop of that name, Count von Falkenberg in his own right, that the memorable expedition went forth against Cologne, which, including the entire forces of the see, aided by those

of the Archbishop of Mainz and the Counts of Berg, Cleves, and Gueldres, and threatening inevitable destruction to that proud and opulent city, ended—in a dream. This is its history.

Immediately after the escape of old Herman Gryn from the deadly snare into which he was led by the archbishop's emissaries,* an insurrection took place, as already related, in Cologne, and that prelate's officers and friends were driven out of the city by the enraged burghers. Engelbert, excited beyond measure at this defeat, resolved to be revenged on his rebellious subjects, cost him what it might. Aware, however, that open force would avail but little against a people so powerful in themselves from numbers and union, and then so irresistible from the consciousness of recent conquest, he set on foot, with the usual effect, the old clerical agency of corruption, and treachery, and intrigue among them. At this period, the city of Cologne was a prey to intestine discord; the different noble families were arrayed in parties against each other, similar to those of the Italian cities in the same era; and the common people were divided between these respective parties, or engaged in asserting their own rights, or augmenting their own privileges, by means of the several guilds, or trade companies. The state of society there was quite out of joint. To increase this confusion, the wily prelate despatched one of his most faithful servants and expert diplomatists, Anselm von Vinstigen, thither, with instructions to spare neither money nor promises for the purpose of exciting the contending parties against each other. In the meanwhile, he concluded a secret alliance with his neighbours, the Archbishop of Mainz and the Counts of Berg and Cleves, by which he bound them, in requital for certain territorial concessions to be made by his subjects, to assist him with all their disposable forces, in the event of his attacking Cologne.

Anselm von Vinstigen performed the task entrusted to him most effectively. His first step was to win over the plebeians. These he easily persuaded to the belief that the patricians, or nobility, were their natural enemies and inexorable oppressors. When did rank, and riches, and station, ever find friendship or

* Vide the Rath-Haus, page 71, &c.

sympathy with the mob of a civic community? He pointed out that the contests of these, their hereditary foes, were for their own private aggrandisement, and not for the good of the state; and he shewed them that, whichever triumphed, the condition of the lower classes would not be bettered, but, on the contrary, there was every reason to suppose would be made infinitely worse. He was successful: few who appeal to the bad passions of a mob are ever otherwise. With the nobility, however, he took another course; but it was one equally skilful, and equally effective for his purpose. The ancient families of the city were divided into two principal bodies, named after their different leaders, the Overstolz and the Weise parties; and they hated each other with a hatred only known in narrow communities, when the struggle is for precedence of rank or superiority of power. To the one he spoke of the pride and haughtiness of the other; and he was always sure to find willing auditors for a theme so acceptable to either. He told each in private, of the archbishop's desire to put down the other; and both swallowed the bait, without perceiving the deadly barb concealed beneath it. When there exists a causeless animosity between individuals, or parties of men, there are not long wanting to them sufficient excuses to justify, in their own eyes, the most unwarrantable acts of treachery, of violence, or of cruelty to one another. Thus it was with the nobility of Cologne. Each party entered into the conspiracy against the other, with the common foe of both, the archbishop; and every man among them was prepared to slay his neighbour for the gratification of an idle hatred, which, if he had but ordinary forecast, he would not fail to perceive could only terminate in the most slavish subserviency to that ruthless prelate. A fearful gulf yawned before them, though in their furious blindness they could not perceive it.

In accordance with the suggestion of Anselm von Vinstigen, the plebeians of Cologne, determined on striking a bold stroke, by which the patricians were not only to be humbled in their power, but also annihilated in their persons. The heads of the trades or guilds held a secret meeting, at which it was resolved that, on the following Whit-Monday, a public fête should be given by them in the open space called the Kirch-marckt (Church Market). This resolution was come to for the following rea-

sons :—It was deemed that the patricians would either prevent the assemblage of the common people in the first instance, or, in the second, that they would be present themselves to participate in the amusement in a peaceful manner. In either case, it was a part of the plan of the conspirators to attack them, and, if successful in the onset, then to proceed to their entire extirpation.

The day arrived, and the plebeians prepared to assemble at the place of appointment. But the patricians, who had an inkling of their intentions, and who had held meetings on the subject also, were prepared to oppose them. A strong muster of mounted knights, and men at arms to back them, blocked up all the passages leading to the rendezvous. The result was a fierce and protracted contest between the two classes, which lasted the entire of the day, and ended in the total discomfiture of the common people.

This event was most inauspicious for the designs of the archbishop ; for by its means a reconciliation was, to all appearance, effected, between the contending parties, into which the nobility, his direct enemies, were previously divided. The proud and wrathful prelate cursed his ill-fortune, his agents, his friends, and his foes, and wished himself dead, in the bitterness of his disappointment.

This disappointment, however, seemed destined to be but temporary. Once more, within a few weeks after this occurrence, the patrician families of Cologne were in the field against each other. They had reduced the common enemy to subjection ; they no longer feared the broken power of the plebeians ; and they again turned their hatred into its old, accustomed channel. Engelbert availed himself of the circumstance, with the ruthlessness of a fiend and the cunning of a serpent ; nor did he fail to find numberless agents as active and as unscrupulous as himself. Among them was one whose name deserves eternal reprobation, and whose memory will be a mark for obloquy and contempt as long as treason is abhorred by mankind. He was a monk, a native of Cologne, and his name was Wolfart. He proposed to the archbishop to set fire to the city in several points ; and he offered himself to be the incendiary. The prelate at once acceded to the proposition ; it was in strict keeping

with the quality of his own character, and the state of his feelings at the time. An arrangement to that effect was accordingly made: the monk was to proceed to Cologne (his holy office securing him from any violent suspicion of such a nefarious act); and the archbishop, it was agreed, should march on the city privately, and be prepared to attack it when the first fire was lighted.

But some one or other of those incidents which occur to defeat the deepest laid schemes—incidents which, whether they be referable to the chapter of accidents, or to the special interposition of Providence, are always, perhaps rightly, attributed to the latter—occurred to defeat this foul plot. The monk was suspected; he was made prisoner; the time of operation accordingly passed over without result. The archbishop, together with his allies, waited and watched in vain for the signal,—it appeared not. To attack the city without concert, would be to try a hopeless experiment; they were consequently forced to encamp in its vicinity until the morning, the current of the river being too rapid to permit them to ascend to Bonn before the dawning of the next day.

It was, however, resolved, by the archbishop in secret, that an assault should be made in Cologne before he left its walls, and, without imparting his designs to his allies, he issued orders for preparations accordingly. But the Counts of Berg and Cleves became aware of his intention—by what means is not known; and it is to be presumed, from what followed, they had agreed with one another to defeat it.

At day-break, the proud and restless prelate was visited by the Count of Cleves in his own tent. The object of the visit was to communicate to him a singular vision which that prince purported to have had in the preceding night, and which he gave the prelate to understand considerably affected his mind with regard to his future proceedings.

“Methought,” he said, “I saw in my sleep—or rather in my waking, for sleep it was none;—methought I saw, as I lay on the ground and looked out on the city in the dim starlight, last night, a virgin form, of exquisite beauty and angelic sweetness, float through the deep, dark, azure atmosphere. She was followed by eleven thousand virgin forms (I counted them all),

each beautiful and angelic in their aspect also, but none of them so beautiful as she. They, every one, bore palm-branches in their hands, and sang a loud Hosannah."

"Bah! bah!" interposed the petulant Engelbert. "Bah! an idle dream. You drank overmuch of your favourite Liebfrauenmilch last night before you lay down. But it was ever the way with you."

"Nay, my lord archbishop, you wrong me much; I did but break bread and taste water since yester-noon," replied the count.—"But, to proceed. They passed over the town in glorious array, their long white garments floating on through the skies, surrounded with radiance and brilliant light; and blessed every roof in the city. They then blessed the walls. I hoped that they would next bless our camp; but they held out their fair hands, as if to ban us, instead, and finally disappeared. I do assure you, my lord, I was wide awake as I am now. And so, with your grace's good leave, I'll none of this war more. It is unholy. Heaven fights against us."

The archbishop raged and reasoned, threatened and expostulated, prayed, and swore, almost in the same breath, at the cowardice and the superstition of the count; but that prince was too much of a politician to be affected by either his ire, his entreaties, or his arguments. While they were thus engaged, the Count of Berg suddenly entered the tent. He came unannounced. Deep determination sat on his brow.

"My lord archbishop," he spake in his rough manner, "we must separate. I'll take no part against Cologne at present."

The astonished prelate inquired the cause of this hasty resolve.

"I had a dream," said the Count of Berg, "and, by the God above us! I know it to be true. The saints are leagued against us. Let us break up the camp, and return to our homes."

The count then proceeded to relate, in rude, but circumstantial language, a similar vision to that which his predecessor and colleague purported to have witnessed.

Scarcely had he concluded his narrative, when the Bishop of Mainz entered.

"Your grace will excuse my drawing off my contingent to your army," he gracefully insinuated; "but St. Ursula and the

eleven thousand virgins have visibly forbade us to interfere just now with the city of Cologne. You know, my lord, that it is under their especial patronage; and you know, also, that the church prohibits the prosecution of any design which Heaven has interposed to prevent. God wills it so."

The Bishop of Mainz then told his tale of a vision, exactly tallying with that of the two princely laymen who preceded him in the same wondrous narration.

"And you, too!" was all he said to the Bishop of Mainz; but these words were equivalent to volumes of reproach. It was the *tu Brute* of Cæsar: for by Engelbert's influence had that prelate been placed on the episcopal throne.

Engelbert saw that he was betrayed.

Within an hour from that interview, the Counts of Berg and Cleves had drawn off their men from the archbishop's army; and the Bishop of Mainz had actually set out with his quota of troops on his return to his own territory. Engelbert, left almost alone, with a force quite inadequate to defend himself in the event of an attack on the part of the citizens of Cologne, abandoned his position, and retreated as speedily as possible to Bonn. Thus ended the expedition,—in a dream.

Bonn became, subsequently, the temporary abode of the Weisen, one of the parties into which the nobility of Cologne was split, on their defeat and expulsion by their opponents, the Overstolzen, and was, in consequence, for a considerable lapse of time the focus of additional plots, intrigues, and unceasing attempts upon that city. One of these attempts was so very nearly successful, and the circumstances which led to its defeat were so very singular, that it is deemed not inappropriate to detail it briefly here. It shall close the history of this stormy period.

The Weisen were, naturally enough, most eager to recover their lost power and possessions in Cologne, and most anxious to subdue their adversaries. To effect this double purpose they spared neither trouble nor expense, and paid no regard to any thing but the means of its fulfilment. In pursuance of these objects, they held private correspondence with their friends and emissaries in that city, and neglected no opportunity of annoying their enemies. Their agents were active and daring; and,

being equally unscrupulous as their employers, they soon became fitting instruments for their worst designs. One of them, a venal villain, named Habenichts, who dwelt in a house which adjoined the city wall on the side of Bonn, agreed to cut a passage beneath the bastion from his house to the opposite side, for a certain sum of money. The local historians of the period say the sum was thirty marks of silver; but it is more than probable that it was much greater; and that they only fixed on that amount to make the parallel between him and Judas, the betrayer of Christ, the more striking. The passage was cut accordingly; and, the money being first paid, all was in readiness to admit the enemy.

The more effectually to subdue both friends and foes in the event of gaining access to Cologne, the archbishop once again allied himself with the Count of Cleves, who was not so scrupulous on this occasion as on the former; he also obtained the aid of the Count of Limburg, who had an old grudge against the citizens, and was desirous to do them some deadly injury. The combined forces marched from Bonn in the evening, and reached the entrance of this passage unobserved, in the darkness of the night. A portion of them made good their entrance undiscovered; a circumstance, unforeseen and unprovided for, prevented their acquiring the mastery of the city, or even succeeding in getting any distance within its walls.

The Count of Limburg was among the first who emerged from the subterranean way into the cellar of Habenichts' house; and, in the gladness of his heart, he gave utterance to his joy aloud.

"Ha! by God!" quoth he, "an the burghers sleep not less soundly than they do now in a half an hour hence, we will even slay them in their beds, beside their wives."

These words were spoken too loudly, as it turned out: for a man named Herman Wincklebart, who dwelt in the next house, overheard them. The truth flashed upon his mind at once. Being a zealous partisan of the Overstolz party, he rushed forth, half-clothed as he was, and gave the alarm in the quarter of the city where their principal men resided. The alarm soon became general—the citizens, patricians and plebeians, thronged to the place of combat. The walls were speedily manned: the house

in which were the enemy closely surrounded. All further ingress and egress was cut off from those within and from those without: the latter were prevented from entering the mouth of the passage—the former from leaving the spot in which they now held out.

The ardour of these partial prisoners was, however, too great to be so easily repressed. They burst forth from their narrow quarters, and, to the number of three hundred, rushed on the mob before the door with the effect of a whirlwind, scattering all before them. The archbishop's own first cousin, the Lord of Falkenberg, one of the bravest warriors of his day, headed the *sortie*. The citizens gave way to the impetus, and fled in every direction. Victory seemed, for a moment, to declare in favour of the assailants. At this juncture, Mathias Overstolz, the head of the party which took its title from his family name, rushed to the van of his flying friend's auxiliaries, and rallied them back to the combat.

"Gentlemen and brothers," 'twas thus he spoke, "our lives and liberties are at stake. There stands our foe. They will subdue or slay us, if we let them. They may do so if they can; but, for my part, I shall not die until I have dealt such destruction among them as will furnish them with subject-matter of conversation for a hundred years to come. I, for one, shall not live to be their bondsman."

A loud cheer of defiance answered this spirited appeal. At the head of his reunited forces he dashed on the invaders. The fight was long and fearful: every inch of ground was contested with the energy of despair—every blow dealt destruction. The street was heaped with the dead and the dying. But the battle was very unequal: for, of all the Overstolzen, only forty remained, while the foe brought full one hundred to bear on them, commanded by those brave and experienced captains, the Lord of Falkenberg and the Count of Limburg. The result was for some time a matter of much doubt and uncertainty. This doubt and uncertainty did not, however, long continue: for a fresh reinforcement of their friends arrived to their aid, accompanied by some thousands of the infuriated mob. The tide of victory was turned, at once, into a tumultuous defeat by this great accession of strength: and the Weisen left their bravest warriors on the

field, retreating towards the house by which they had obtained entrance to the city. From thence they finally effected their escape into the open country, and reached Bonn, in a most disastrous plight, the same evening.

The victory and the defeat cost both parties their principal leaders, as well as their best men; the Lord of Falkenberg, the archbishop's cousin, being slain in the action, and the Count of Limburg made prisoner: Mathias Overstolz, on the other side, died of his wounds.

For a considerable period subsequently Bonn became daily more opulent and more powerful, in consequence of the accession of the old noble families of Cologne, who resorted thither when driven from their native city by the turbulence of the commonalty. It arrived at its highest pitch of riches and greatness in the years 1254–6, when it joined as a member the famous Hanseatic league. Two disastrous sieges which it sustained in the beginning of the sixteenth century, both arising from one cause—a contest for the principality—gave the first deadly blow to its power and opulence.

In the year 1480, the chapter of Cologne elected to the episcopal dignity Rupert, Pfalzgraf of the Middle Rhine, younger brother to the celebrated Pfalzgraf of the same title, better known as Frederic the Victorious. He was called to that station because of his family influence; but he did not answer, in other respects, the expectations of those who elected him. Calculating for support upon his brother's power, he paid no attention to the wishes of the superior clergy: the consequence of which was, that, after various complaints and much disputation, the chapter of Cologne ultimately deposed him, and elected Hermann, a Landgraf of Nassau, in his stead, A.D. 1500. Rupert was taken unawares by this bold act of his clergy; but he did not lose his courage. He fled to his brother's court, and claimed his assistance. Frederic was not slow in affording him assistance the most ample and efficient. At the head of an immense army, inured to fatigue and accustomed to conquest, the brothers dropped down the Rhine; and, making themselves masters of several refractory towns on their way, finally took post before Bonn. The siege was short, but effective: the city

surrendered unconditionally, and was once more placed in the power of the exiled prelate.

But, though Rupert succeeded in gaining the city of Bonn and the greater part of the territory of the archdiocese of Cologne, he alienated, by this act of calling in the aid of his family influence, the hearts of those of his subjects who were not previously adverse to his cause, as well as of those who were indifferent parties in the struggle between him and his more immediate enemies. Hermann, his opponent, besides the support he received from his brother, the powerful Landgraf of Hesse, succeeded, also, in winning to his side the still more powerful Duke of Gueldres, and several other princes his neighbours. The Emperor of Germany, the weak and wicked Frederic III., also abetted his cause, and identified himself with his quarrel more through hatred of the great Frederic, his namesake, than through any feeling for him, or against Rupert. As if to complete the misfortune of Rupert, his brother, the victorious Pfalzgraf, died suddenly at this time ; with him died all his hopes of effectual resistance to his foes. The chapter, on the news of this event, once more took heart ; and the hapless archbishop was again constrained to fly from Bonn. Being now without the aid of his mighty relative, he cast about for assistance in some other equally influential quarter. Charles the Bold, duke of Burgundy, was at this period one of the most powerful and most ambitious princes in Europe : prompt to embrace any cause which promised him aggrandisement : heedless of the justice of any quarrel in which he engaged, so that it brought him an accession of power, or an increase of territory : unscrupulous as to the means he employed — always, however, preferring force to cunning — so the end he sought was attained ; he was, perhaps, more fitted for an emergency of the kind than any other sovereign in existence. To him the deposed prelate applied to reinstate him once more in his lost sovereignty ; and his application was at once entertained and acceded to.

The history of the siege of Bonn, undertaken by this ambitious prince at the suit of this desperate prelate, differs in no wise from that of those which preceded it. It was brief, but bloody. A glance at the composition of the beleaguering

host will not, however, be without interest to the general reader.

Immediately on the conclusion of the treaty of alliance with the archbishop, Charles despatched heralds to Bonn, and, subsequently, to Cologne, demanding the re-instatement of Rupert in the temporal and ecclesiastical government of the diocess; the expulsion of Hermann of Nassau from the episcopal chair; and the delivery up to him of all the leaders of the opposition; all, in short, who took part in deposing his friend and ally, the archbishop. These conditions the chapter refused to comply with, and returned an answer of defiance instead. Charles then set his army in motion, and descended the Rhine, ostensibly for the purpose of constraining them to his purpose, but, in reality, to make himself master of the lower part of the river; and thus to possess that important thoroughfare from Basle to the sea, in furtherance of his long-conceived design to make himself master of all western Europe. His forces consisted of thirty thousand of the best and bravest soldiers in Christendom, all picked men from various nations — Burgundians, French, Italians, and English — commanded by the duke in person, assisted by the ablest generals of the age. They were accompanied and followed by about ten thousand other beings, of both sexes, to administer to their wants or their pleasures. Among them were fifteen hundred *filles de joie*, and four hundred priests, suttlers innumerable, and a host besides of those idlers who follow a camp as the raven follows the scent of carrion.

Bonn soon fell before this irresistible power; and was delivered up to the archbishop, after it had been duly plundered.

The subsequent history of this city may be rapidly related. It was ravaged once more, A.D. 1584–1589, in consequence of siding with the Elector Gebhard of Walburg, who at the outbreak of the reformation, after marrying Agnes von Mansfeldt, a nun, attempted to secularise the diocess, and constitute it into a temporal principality. In 1673, it surrendered to the united powers of Holland, Spain, and Austria. Frederick III., Duke of Brandenburg, afterwards the first King of Prussia, made himself master of it in 1689; and, in 1703, the Dutch, under the command of the celebrated General Cöhorn, or Kùhorn, the great engineer, assaulted and carried it after a short bombardment.

About the latter end of the same year, it fell into the hands of our Duke of Marlborough and the allies. From 1795 to 1814, it continued in the possession of the French government, republican and imperial. In the latter year, it was entered and occupied by the allied forces on the expulsion of Bonaparte from France; and in 1818, two years subsequently, it was annexed to the territories of Prussia, part of which kingdom it still continues.

THE MÜNSTER.

THE VEHM-GERICHTE, OR SECRET TRIBUNAL.

Certainly the most prominent public structure in Bonn is the Parochial, or *Münster-Kirche*. Tradition assigns its origin to the Empress Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great; and the crypt is, undoubtedly, Roman in its construction: but the present superstructure, however, dates no further back than the twelfth century; and it is, most probably, a re-edification of the ancient church, constructed, perhaps, by that celebrated patroness of Christianity.

It was in the crypt of this venerable edifice, according to the most credible traditionary authorities, that the terrific tribunal, known, in the middle ages, as the *Vehm-gerichte*, or Secret Tribunal, held its chief court, and issued therefrom those fearful mandates, which made even the proudest princes of the period quail and tremble.

From the date of the decay of the ancient institutions of Charlemagne, the German empire became a prey to intestine discord, until it was afflicted with almost every evil incident to an unsettled state of society. The power of the strong hand (*Faustrecht*) predominated; might grew into right in the minds of men; and no redress existed for oppression or wrong, provided the culprit could afford to set the insufficient laws, and the venal and weak authorities appointed to enforce them, at defiance. At this juncture, happily for the peace of the land, the great Elector and Archbishop of Cologne, Engelbert the First, made his ap-

pearance on the public stage (A.D. 1213–25), and set about effecting those reforms in the social condition which the disordered state of the times, and the general disorganisation of all classes, rendered absolutely necessary.

Of Engelbert's character, mention has already been made :* he was truly the greatest man of his age and country. To remedy the general disorder which prevailed, not alone in his own dominions, but also over the entire empire, he projected, as a first step, the establishment of a secret tribunal ; and then he obtained from the emperor and the pope, their sanction to his self-appointment as its chief—the grand inquisitor of the empire. This tribunal was termed the *Vehm-Gerichte*.† He next entered into the strictest secret alliances with the princes neighbouring on his diocess, and also with the great barons who were interested in the preservation of order ; and bound them, by the most stringent oaths, to further the decrees and execute the judgments of the *Vehm-Gerichte*, of which they were all constituted members by this compact. The original object of this tribunal was one of the most laudable description possible ; it took extrajudicial cognisance of all murders, assassinations, rapes, robberies, sacrileges, and adulteries ; and punished them accordingly. The culprit, or accused party, was cited before the secret tribunal by means of a summons, generally affixed to some conspicuous part of his bed-chamber ; but often also conveyed secretly on his person, or offered to his sight, under circumstances of peculiar mystery, by the numerous emissaries of the tribunal. If the citation was answered by him, he was tried in secret, and privately punished ; if he refused to appear, he was proceeded against as if he were present, and the guilt of contumacy was added to the other charges of which he might be accused. In the latter case, he very rarely escaped the doom pronounced against him ; for the agents of the terrific tribunal were every where ; and no place was deemed free from their all-

* Vide pp. 17, 98.

† From *Vehm*, or *Wehm*, a word of uncertain etymology, and of still more uncertain meaning, but probably from *Weh* (wo, grief, sorrow), and *Gerichte* (jurisdiction, or judgment, court, tribunal, &c.). Sir F. Palgrave says it is derived from *Ehme* ("law"), vide "Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth. London, 1832."

pervading power and presence. In the camp, on the high-roads, on the by-roads, in the heart of the most desolate solitudes, on the mountain peak, in the depth of the valley, yea, even in the midst of his own retainers and friends, fortified within his own strong castle, the culprit could never calculate for one moment on his life, once that the mandate for his destruction had gone forth from the Vehm-Gerichte. Rank, station, courage, and daring, were no safeguards against a power which seemed omnipotent as well as omnipresent; and which was, moreover, never known to have permitted the escape of its victim. It was a desperate remedy; but the disease to which it was applied was of an equally desperate nature. In so far there is justification for it.

The existence of such a power, the circumstances under which it was exercised, and the invisibility of its agents and actors, were soon the source of terror to all evil-doers in the land; but especially so to those who dwelt in the diocess of Cologne. The consternation it caused among them soon extended itself to every other portion of the empire; for the secret tribunal had established branches in every chief ecclesiastical city in Germany; and it was firmly believed, that no village even was without one of its agents. Perhaps it did not altogether suppress crime—perhaps it only caused it to be perpetrated less openly than before: but even so, however, it produced a salutary influence upon public morals; and made men more cautious of outraging the sacred bond which binds society together. This influence lasted for a considerable time; and Engelbert, though he fell a sacrifice to his zeal for order,* lived long enough to witness the best results produced by its operation. Like all things merely human, however, it had its abuses, and, in the lapse of ages, fell into contempt and deserved decay. The system of secret accusation which it established was the source of many crimes, and of much of the worst description of injustice. When it was once discovered that a charge of the gravest nature, involving the most serious consequences, might be made against any man with impunity, the wicked and the wanton were not slow in availing themselves of the fearful power so carelessly permitted to their grasp. The result, there-

* Vide pp. 107-8, &c.

fore, often was, that many an innocent person perished before the tribunal had time to discover the falsity of the accusation, or an opportunity afforded it of rectifying its judgments. The progress of information, too, was altogether unfavourable to its continuance. It could only have existence in a country where civilisation was in a very low state among the mass of the people, or was solely confined to a few individuals, or small communities. As knowledge, however, increased; as the arts of life became more known, and oftener practised; and as the social compact grew to be better understood, the power of the *Vehm-Gerichte* became every day weaker and more weak, and its influence less fearful and far less extensive. In the thirteenth century, it was dreaded by all men; in the fourteenth, it was spoken of as a thing still formidable; but, in the fifteenth, it altogether disappeared from their minds,—thanks to the invention of printing, and perhaps, also, to the first convulsive throes of that mighty moral earthquake, destined to effect such an entire change in the social condition of Europe during the early part of the succeeding century—the Reformation.

Of the countless legends, traditions, and historical relations to which the mere name of such a tribunal must necessarily have given rise, one is selected for these pages, to serve rather as an illustration of the circumstances of the time, and the mode of proceeding adopted by that fearful association, than as an authentic or credible narrative. To which of these classes it belongs—legend, tradition, or history—there are no means of ascertaining; perhaps it may be rightly designated as a combination of all three, it approximated so closely to the province of each. That, however, is left to research of local antiquaries to discover. This is the tale:—

The Freyherr von Feyermahl was one of those robber-knights who infested the archdiocese of Cologne in the thirteenth century; and a lawless man was he, even among those who acknowledged no law but to violate it. His castle stood on the acclivity of the Mountain of Feyermahl, at the entrance of a thick wood, in the immediate vicinity of the ruined Roman aqueduct from Treves to Cologne; and from this inaccessible situation he made almost daily forays on his neighbours, carrying off their cattle and their provisions, their money, and their

valuables, and sparing not the chastity of their wives, sisters, and daughters, whenever they fell into his hands. It was quite the same to him their quality; high and low, rich and poor, were alike in his eyes; he impartially plundered them all, without scruple and without remorse; and well was it for them, and they might consider themselves fortunate, too, if they were not maltreated by his troopers into the bargain. Yet, in the opinion of the times, he was "an honourable man:" for in those days, few that had the power failed to exercise his occupation; and his birth and station gave a sanction and a grace to his crimes, in the eyes of those who then constituted public opinion—the nobility and knighthood of the country.

Among the most flagrant of his misdeeds, however, was one which brought the infallible vengeance of the church upon his head, and made him a mark for all its concentrated wrath. In the adjacent village of Kommern, which is situated in the mountainous district that contains the Bley-berg or Lead Mountain, dwelt a rural clergyman of blameless life and spotless fame, the pastor of the vicinity. He had only one member in his small family, a niece, the daughter of a beloved sister long dead, who made his home happy and cheered his heart, when the spiritual labours of his simply spent day were over. She was surpassingly beautiful; and she was, moreover, innocence personified. Her, the bold Freyherr von Feyermahl saw, and at once determined to possess. To resolve and to act was with him but the work of a moment. In the dead of the night he surrounded the house of the aged priest with his myrmidons, and tore this lovely girl, his dear child, as he always called her, shrieking from the roof which had sheltered her infancy, and rung with her girlish glee, and under which she had grown up to grave and gentle womanhood. The ruffian crew that accompanied him first plundered it according to custom, and then set it on fire, either in pure wantonness of heart, or to prevent detection. It was with considerable difficulty that the villagers—aroused too late to his assistance—succeeded in rescuing their aged pastor, overwhelmed with the extent of his affliction, and debilitated by grief and years, from the flames. The devouring element, however, destroyed every vestige of the little property left him by the ruthless ruffians who had robbed him of her who

was dearer to him than all worldly treasures, and only second to heaven in his estimation. He was beggared.

The author of this calamity was well known in the neighbourhood; but silence was kept in regard to him by all persons, for fear of a similar fate. The old priest, however, was placed by the grateful villagers in a new house, smaller, it is true, than the one which had been so basely destroyed on him, and far less fitted for his declining years, but still large enough for his very restricted household; and not the less acceptable, perhaps, to him, for standing alone and apart, at the extremity of the village, and totally unconnected with any of his flock.

Twelve months had come and gone since the disastrous occurrence just related had taken place: it was almost forgotten in the vicinity. The old man, bowed to the earth by sorrow and unceasing grief, sat in his solitary chamber at the fall of a late autumn evening, musing on his hapless fate, and praying for his lost child. The day had been dark and gloomy, and the

rising of the wind, on its decline, foretold a gathering storm. Not a star was to be seen in the sky—all was pitch dark above and below, for even the villagers had retired to rest earlier than usual—and no “glimmering taper’s ray” announced human existence in the neighbourhood.

“God of goodness!” soliloquised he; “I may not question the wisdom of thy decrees, or repine at thy acts; but she was sinless as an angel, and me-seemed to deserve not such a doom as she has met with. Oh! that I could but clasp her once more in these withered arms, to this sorrowful heart! Oh! that I could but lay these trembling hands on her gentle head again, and bless her with a father’s blessing! I would then pass away in peace. But the spirit of my sainted sister hovers over me, and forbids me to die till her daughter be avenged. Oh! God of Justice, when, in thy mercy, wilt thou judge the unrighteous author of this great wrong? I care not for myself—I ask not for punishment on him on mine own account—but for her, the pride, the hope, the joy of my heart; the fond, the fair, the gentle, and the good, shall her wrongs be unredressed? Forbid it, Heaven!”

The old man spoke impassionedly, and more energetically than was his wont; but he soon corrected his error, and resumed his usual calmness of mood.

“Pardon, O God!” he exclaimed, prostrating himself on the earth; “pardon the feelings of poor, suffering humanity, and forgive, in the abundance of thy goodness, the frailty of a penitent heart! Do with me, Lord, as thou wilt; but, oh! preserve my dear child, and judge her enemies.”

This half-penitent adjuration had scarce passed his lips, when he felt a hand on each of his shoulders, and heard voices bidding him arise, and make ready to go forth. He started to his feet as quickly as his failing limbs would allow, and gazed in awe and wonder at his mysterious visitants. They were three in number, all garbed in long dark cloaks, which they held up to their faces, and wearing large broad-brimmed hats, which, flapping over their brows, completely concealed their eyes, and every other part of their countenances uncovered by their cloaks. The old man was for a moment dismayed. He could not conceive how they came thither, not recollecting at the moment his own previous abstraction of mind; he had heard no

footfall to announce their presence; the door had not even creaked, as it usually did, on being opened.

"Are they," he thought, "of another world? and has the Lord heard my impious ravings, and sent them hither to punish me? Be it so, I trust to his justice. Lord, look with mercy on me!"

"Art ready, father?" spake the foremost of the group, who seemed also to be the chief, and to have command of the others. "Time presses—we must away, ere the night advances."

The voice was human.

"Whither?" mechanically asked the much-alarmed, but still somewhat re-assured old man.

"To Bonn—by midnight," replied the speaker sententiously.

The old man felt still more re-assured by this answer. He thought that there could not be much danger intended, as the destination pointed out to him was Bonn; and he had a vague presentiment, that the mission of these mysterious men was somehow or other connected with the all-absorbing idea which occupied his mind, to the exclusion of every other—his lost darling. He had but momentarily believed that they were of the other world, for his own good sense soon shewed him that they were mortals like himself.

"On what business, good sirs?" he inquired, after a brief pause. "Why so late in the night? And why ask me to journey so far, wherefor I know nothing as yet? I am old and infirm—I am a priest, and protected by the church—say, then, on what business, or for whose cause, am I required to proceed thither?"

"By the mandate of the *Vehm*!" slowly and solemnly enunciated the chief of the party, throwing open his cloak at the same time, and displaying the symbols of that tribunal—a coil of rope, a dagger, and a scroll of parchment.

The old man's heart sank in his bosom, as he heard that awful name; his limbs tottered; his breath failed. It was, in truth, a name of potency and terror; for just at that period its influence was in full force, and its victims daily paid the forfeit of their real or supposed delinquencies in every part of the empire. He would have fallen to the ground, but for the interposition of the official who had spoken to him.

"Fear not," whispered his supporter, with a touch of

natural tenderness and compassion, in his scarcely audible tones ;
“ it is for thy child’s sake.”

This word was a word of power with the old man ; it awoke all his dormant and decaying energies ; he stood erect and undaunted ; his brow cleared, his eye became bright.

“ I am ready,” he exclaimed ; “ come, quick, let us delay not a moment.”

“ Be it so,” was all his companion said in reply.

They left the chamber as silently as they had entered it. At the door stood a black-covered vehicle, with three steeds yoked to it. They ascended, and severally took their seats ; the chief and the old man within ; the others, one on the driver’s bench, and one behind. Off they dashed ; the village was soon cleared ; they were on the high road.

“ When shall we reach Bonn ?” were the only words which escaped the aged priest during the journey.

“ At midnight,” was the answer.

Further communication passed not between them.

In the crypt of the Münster Church of Bonn, that portion of the sacred edifice which originally took form from the piety of the Empress Helena, and still remains, through time, and chance, and change, a monument to her memory, as the first Christian sovereign of Bonn, were assembled, on the night in question, the brotherhood of the Vehm-Gerichte. The judges alone were absent ; the archbishop and the arch-chancellor had not yet made their appearance ; neither had the secretary of the tribunal. It was evident, however, though the most intense silence pervaded the dimly lighted, damp vault, that some extraordinary circumstance had caused such a full attendance, and that the business to be transacted was not of an ordinary nature. As the great bell of the church boomed twelve, the black curtain which hung across the eastern extremity of the immense apartment, was drawn back ; and in the recess beneath the altar, above their heads, in the church, were seen the judges of the tribunal seated, clothed in the costume fitted for the occasion, and prepared to fulfil the functions of their fearful office. The usual ensigns of the tribunal — a dagger, a coil of rope, and a scroll of

parchment—lay on the plain table before them. In advance of the table was an open grave ; and at the head of the grave stood a headsman's block, with a sharp heavy axe glittering in the dim light, as the rushing wind, ever and anon, caused it to flicker luridly on its polished sides and edge. A tall, athletic man, bared to the waist, but his face concealed by a dark crape covering, lounged against one of the massive pillars which supported the low roof of the crypt, half visible and half hidden from the multitude which filled the spacious apartment. He was the executioner in chief of the tribunal, and only called on to exercise his functions when the condemned was noble.

“ Let the culprit stand forward,” spake the president.

“ Let the witnesses appear,” he added also, after a moment's pause.

Slowly and solemnly two figures emerged on the precincts of the judgment-seat, from side doors which turned noiselessly on their hinges. They approached each other with measured tread, while a third tottered up the centre of the crowded crypt, through a passage apparently made for the purpose by the silent spectators. The first who stood forth was a man in the prime of life, caparisoned as a noble knight, but wanting his sword, and all other offensive weapons : he was totally disarmed. The second was a maiden of tender years, but wasted by care and sorrow : she was deeply veiled, and looked like the dim spectre of departed beauty. The third was an aged man in the clerical garb, bent with grief as much as with age, but seemingly sustained in his bearing by some powerful immediate excitement. The maiden held a babe in her arms, which she pressed repeatedly to her emaciated bosom. The open grave, and the headsman's deadly apparatus, intervened between her and the knight : they stood at each side of the table.

“ Freyherr von Feyermahl,” said the president (the Archbishop of Cologne), in the deep, solemn tones of unbounded authority ; “ Freyherr von Feyermahl, knowest thou this maiden ? ”

The sullen culprit, for such he was deemed, made no answer to the interrogatory.

“ You are accused, before this holy tribunal,” pursued the speaker, “ of having violated her person. You are accused of

having desecrated the home of a priest ;—destroyed and plundered it,—to accomplish your foul purpose. Speak, if you have aught to urge in denial or extenuation of this grave charge ?”

Still the culprit replied not.

“ She bears your child on her bosom—the offspring of your guilt, but not of her shame : she is innocent.”

The impenitent man made no answer to this appeal either.

“ The Court, therefore, adjudges you,” added the prelate, “ to expiate your crime to her, as far as you may expiate it, by making her your wife. The Court also adjudges that the offspring of your guilt shall be the inheritor of your name and lands, and the representative of your lineage, though born without the blessed bonds of wedlock.”

“ Never !” exclaimed the hardened culprit ; “ I am a free baron of the empire ; I deny your power !”

The Archbishop made a sign, and the struggling villain was in a moment pinioned from behind. At another sign the aged priest of Kommern pressed forward.

“ Maiden, stretch forth thy hand,” spake the prelate.

The maiden did as she was directed.

“ Officers, hold out his hand,” he continued, motioning to the refractory culprit.

It was done ; his hand was held forth as rigidly as if it had been in a smith’s vice.

“ Priest, perform your duty,” he concluded.

The old man then stood forth and read the marriage ceremony. The interchange of rings took place between the parties ; on the one hand perforce, on the other mechanically. The emaciated mother and the sullen culprit were man and wife : the little, innocent babe crowed with infant glee. At the conclusion of the ceremony the veil fell off from the face of the maiden.

“ My child ! my child ! my long lost child !” exclaimed the old priest, rushing into her arms.

For a moment the solemnity of the Court was disturbed, and many an indurated heart, among those who were present, was throbbing in sympathy with that ancient man’s natural emotions. Even the president, the proud prelate himself, seemed touched at the scene. Order was, however, soon restored. The principal parties were again placed in the same relative positions

towards each other; and the business of the Court thus proceeded.

“Freyherr von Feyermahl,” spake the Archbishop once more, and his tones grew deeper and deeper still, as he said the words, “You have been guilty of robbing and slaying my harmless people; you have been guilty of destroying the peace of my dominions; and you have been guilty of sacrilege, in despoiling the abode of one whose life is consecrated to the service of God, and whose property and person are under the protection of the holy church. What have you to say why the judgment of this Court should not go forth against you?”

“I am a free baron of the empire,” replied the accused; “I claim to be judged by my peers in the Diet: I deny your right to try me.”

“Freyherr von Feyermahl,” pursued the prelate, in the same cold, unchanging, passionless tone; “you are condemned, by this tribunal, to die; your moments are numbered; the confessor awaits you; the headsman is ready. May the Lord have mercy on your soul!”

At these words, and a slight sign which accompanied them, the executioner advanced from one side of the hall, where he had, as already related, been lounging carelessly against a massive pillar, and took up his place beside the block, handling the heavy axe the while, to ascertain that its edge was in order; from the other glided forth a priest in full canonicals, with breviary and cross in hand, and approached the culprit, for the purpose of shriving his departing soul. But his proffered aid was unaccepted; the prisoner obstinately refused to confess; confining his dying words entirely to insult of the Court, and denial of its authority.

“I’ll none of your mummeries,” quoth he; “a free baron have I lived, and a free baron shall I die,—if die I must. But my fellows, I hope, will avenge my fall. I appeal to the Germanic Diet.”

At another sign from the Archbishop, he was seized and laid prostrate on the earth;—his head on the block. The headsman’s axe was upraised; it glittered in the dim light of the apartment; it quivered to fall on his neck.

“ My husband ! my husband ! ” shrieked his bride. “ Save him ! save him ! the father of my babe ! save him ! ”

“ Save him ! save him ! ” exclaimed the aged priest. “ Mercy ! mercy ! ”

Both attempted to rush to the archbishop's seat—to fall at his knees,—to beg the ruthless robber's life ; but the powerful grasp of the officials withheld them, and pinioned them immovably to the spot. In the same instant the bright axe of the executioner crashed heavily on the culprit's neck, cutting through flesh, and bone, and beard ; and the dissevered head rolled on the sanded floor, convulsed and contorted in the most fearful manner. The aged priest and his niece fainted. The latter lost all consciousness at once ; the former only recollected that the lights were on a sudden extinguished, and that the scene, in a single moment, was involved in total darkness.

It was noon the next day when the old man awoke from his trance. The occurrences of the past night flitted before his mind, as the remembrance of a dream, or the creations of a fevered fancy. He could not believe in their authenticity. How could he ?—he was in his own bed, in his own lonely cottage, in the village of Kommern. He hears an unwonted noise without.

“ It's but Hans coming home from the field,” he said to himself. “ Ah ! I should not be here ! ”

He hears a voice ; it is a voice familiar to his ear, though long unheard.

“ What may this mean ? ” he soliloquised aloud.

The door of his chamber creaks on its hinges as of yore, and a light foot-fall approaches his bedside. The curtains are gently drawn aside ; a pale face, with long dark hair hanging dishevelled on each side of it, bends fondly and gently over him.

“ My child ! my child ! ” he exclaims.

“ Father—my father ! ” was the answer.

It was his long-lost niece again restored to his arms.

The certainty of the past was soon made apparent to him by a journey to Bonn. In the Münster, close by the high altar, on

a newly raised monument, he read, within a week after this occurrence, the following inscription :—

To the Memory
OF
THE FREYHERR VON FEYERMAHL.
BY
THE VEHM-GERICHTE.
A.D. 1250.

This monument has been long since destroyed, if ever it existed. Ages ago were all the descendants of this ancient house extinct.

Thus ends the story.

ST. MARTIN'S CHURCH.

ALL SOULS' EVE.

The next ecclesiastical edifice in Bonn, in point of antiquity, as well as of legendary importance, is the once noble, but now ruined church of St. Martin, in the immediate vicinity of the Münster. The original structure purported to be coeval with that sacred fane ; and local traditions go so far as to assert, that it was built by the pious Empress Helena about the same period. It is now, however, a ruin ; having been long since secularised, and some time past demolished. With this ancient church is connected the following legend.

It was on the eve of All Souls' Day, in the fifteenth century, when St. Martin's was the pride and the glory of Bonn, that a poor widow woman, who lived in a hovel at some distance from the church, arose, as she deemed, in the early morning, and proceeded thither to hear the holy mass, and pray for the souls of the faithful departed, as is the gentle custom of all those of her class and condition in Catholic countries. The moon shone brightly in the clear, cold sky ; the streets were empty of people

as she passed along them : but she did not heed that, nor look upon it as any thing worthy of notice ; and only thought within herself that she was among the earliest stirring in the town ; and that she should have the best place in the church, in reward of her activity. She approached the great gate of the churchyard ; it stood wide open ; she entered the abode of the dead. As she paced along the pathway which led to the church-door, she could not avoid remarking something unusual in the appearance of the desolate scene which surrounded her. She looked more closely at it : the graves were open—every one of them lay open before her wondering eyes. It was a sight sufficient to appal a stouter heart than hers ; and she shuddered to see it : but she felt that she was urged onward against her own will, without the power to recede ; that she was, as it were, in a vortex, from which there was no chance of escape, and to whose force she was compelled to submit. The church-door was soon gained. She entered.

The interior of the sacred edifice was crowded with human beings, or with those who bore their semblance ; but still they all seemed to her to wear an unearthly look : and the reek which arose from every part of the church was like the odour from a recently opened charnel, in which the relics of mortality might have been rotting for ages. She mixed with the crowd ; but she felt no pressure, though they were around her—

“ Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks,
In Vallombrosa.”

She reached a seat—the only vacant one in the body of the church—and knelt on it, as much to rest herself as to pursue her devotions. While thus engaged she looked in every direction, excited by the irrepressible curiosity of her sex, as much as by the dread of impending danger ; and sought, by every means in her power, to fathom the mystery which she was conscious hung over the scene, though she could not shape her feeling of it into any definite idea or form.

Her first glance was at the altar ; for, even in the female nature, the impulse to piety will often predominate over the stimulus of curiosity. But the more she looked the less satisfaction she found. The chief priest was an aged man, whom

she barely remembered to have seen in her early girlhood; but if it were the same, she well knew he had been dead for full half a century. The assistant clergy were equally familiar to her eyes; but they, too, had been long dead and buried. She glanced at her neighbours; some wore the faces and forms of persons whom she was acquainted with in their lifetime, but who had long gone to their account in the other world; others, those of dear friends whom the grave had also covered for years. She knew not what to think, or what to say, or what to do. "Shall I leave this horrible place?" she asked herself; "or shall I stay? Methinks that the congregation is altogether composed of departed souls, and that I am the only living being among them. What will become of me! what will become of me!"

As she soliloquised thus, she felt her sleeve twitched by some one near her. She turned round sharply to see who did it, and her eye encountered the countenance of her deceased husband kneeling beside her. At no great distance she also saw her two children—a son and a daughter—who had died long before in the prime of life.

"Thank God," she spake again to herself, for she could not speak aloud, though she tried hard to do so on more than one occasion. "Thank God! they'll not harm me, anyhow."

The phantom of her spouse, who had just attracted her attention, placed his skinny finger on his pale lips; and, as if aware of what was passing in her mind, shook his head sorrowfully, and motioned her to silence.

The service proceeded. It was a solemn high mass for the dead, performed with all the pomp and ceremony of that imposing service in the Catholic church. The phantom choristers chanted

THE SEQUENTIA.

"Dies iræ, dies illa
Solvat sæclum in favilla:
Teste David cum Sibyllâ,"

sang the high-priest, in a voice like the wail of the wind through a lone sepulchral vault.

"Dies iræ, dies illa
Solvat seculum in favilla,"

repeated after him the assistant chorus of priests and the congregation; and their song was even as the hollow rumbling of distant thunder on the mountains, or the melancholy moaning of the wintry storm through the leafless Alpine forests. The psalm and the responsive chorus proceeded:

“ Quantus tremor est futurus,
Quando Judex est venturus,
Cuncta stricte discussurus !”

“ Oh, God ! oh, God ! what will become of me ?” exclaimed the poor, frightened old woman, her hair standing on end with terror, and the cold perspiration oozing from every pore in her body.

“ Tuba mirum spargens sonum
Per sepulchra regionum,
Coget omnes ante thronum.”

The shrill notes of a powerful trumpet—shrill and powerful far beyond the pitch of any earthly instrument—pierced her ear as this verse was chanted; and an audible sound of “ weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth,” arose from the prostrate congregation, on the floor of the church, as its tones reverberated along the Gothic roofs.

“ Mors stupebit, et natura,
Cum resurget creatura,
Judicanti responsura.”

“ Alas ! alas ! and wo is me !” spake the aged woman to herself; “ I may not stay here longer ! Oh, God ! oh, God ! what will become of me ?”

Another pluck on the sleeve, and another glance at her deceased husband, made her perceive at once the impossibility of departing at that moment, and the necessity of silence and steadiness of deportment while she staid. His finger was on his lip; his dead eye fixed hers to stone like that of the fabled Gorgon. The solemn song for the dead proceeded—

“ Liber scriptus proferetur,
In quo totum continetur,
Unde mundus judicetur.”

The groans of all around her, at the conclusion of this verse, were soul-harrowing. Indeed it seemed, to her thinking, as

though every grief in this world, and in the next too, was concentrated in each heart that bowed down and worshipped before the altar of the Lord in that church, at that moment.

“ *Judex ergo cum sedebit,
Quidquid latet, apparebit :
Nil inultum remanebit.*”

The high vaulted roof of the sacred edifice resounded with suppressed cries, half-heard complaints, and bitter self-accusations, deep and low, uttered by the disembodied spirits which filled its spacious area.

“ *Quid sum miser, tunc dicturus,
Quem patronum rogaturus ?
Cum vix justus sit securus.*”

“ I cannot bide here longer,” again soliloquised the terrified old woman. “ God is coming to judge them ! Where shall I go ? what shall I do ?”

A sibilating sound in her ear told her that even her thoughts were known ; and an imperceptible gesture of displeasure, from the dead man by her side, checked her proceeding for a further period.

“ *Rex tremendæ majestatis,
Qui salvandos salvas gratis,
Salva me fons pietatis.*”

The tremendous diapason of the organ and the superhuman strength of the chorus combined, produced a most awful music—

“ *As through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vaults,
The pealing anthem swelled the note of praise.*”

“ God is good as well as great,” quoth the ancient dame. “ He’ll not desert me in my hour of need. But, oh ! ’tis fearful to be here.”

“ Amen ! amen !” as in response to her mental ejaculation, uttered more than one hollow voice in her vicinity.

“ *Recordare Jesu pie,
Quod sum causa tuæ viæ,
Ne me perdas illa die.*”

“ Lord, have mercy on me ! Christ, have mercy on me ! Lord, have mercy on me !” The affrighted creature repeated her litany from beginning to end ; for the tumult of ungovernable

grief in the congregation was most alarming to hear, and most appalling to behold.

“ Quærens me, sedisti lassus :
Redemisti, crucem passus :
Tantus labor non sit cassus.”

The human mind can scarcely imagine any situation more pregnant with fear and terror than that of this infirm old woman, surrounded by the dead, and assisting at the celebration of a solemn requiem, performed by departed spirits for their own redemption. She trembled all over, and shook in every limb, as though she were palsied or afflicted with a fit of the ague.

“ Juste Judex ultionis,
Donum fac remissionis
Ante diem rationis.”

Thus the chorus sang in the unearthly voice of the grave ; and the organ loudly pealed, in accompanying tones, which instrument made by human hands never gave forth.

“ Ingemisco tamquam reus :
Culpa rubet vultus meus :
Supplici parce Deus.”

As the cadences of this verse fell on her ear, they were followed up with a running accompaniment of sighs and groans indicative of the deepest remorse, and denoting all but hopeless despair. But the next that came after it, appeared to have an effect still more intensely terrible on the shadowy crowd, who knelt and worshipped in that church.

“ Qui Mariam absolvisti,
Et latronem exaudisti,
Mihi quoque spem dedisti.”

“ Forgive ! forgive !” shrieked the shrilly voices of many women. The sound they emitted was like the wind whistling through the chinks and crevices of a dungeon door, when the storm shrieks abroad in the darkness.

“ Forgive ! forgive !” sighed forth the deep tones of many a rough, masculine voice, in a heart-breaking agony. The sound emitted by them was like that of distant thunder, or the low, rumbling noise which precedes an earthquake.

"What shall I do? what shall I do?" exclaimed the old woman, in a deadly tremour.

Another pluck on the sleeve, and a glance at her dead husband, however, reassured her. The psalm proceeded without interruption, like the voice of God in judgment—severe, serene, majestic, mighty.

"Preces meæ non sunt dignæ :
Sed tu bonus fac benigne,
Ne perenni, cremor igne."

Again the organ note boomed along the echoing roofs, and the chorus sang with tremendous intonation—

"Inter oves locum præsta,
Et ab hædis me sequestra,
Statuens in parte dextra."

No imagination, however, may conceive the combined effect of the words, the music, the tones of the organ, the voice of the chorus, and the indescribable mixture of sounds: now like the crackling of flame, when it catches a forest—now like the roaring of the fire, when it has fastened on its prey—anon like the hissing of serpents, the croaking of toads, and the sibilating of every unclean reptile,—in the verse which succeeded:

"Confutatis maledictis,
Flammis acribus addictis,
Voca me cum benedictis."

The prostrate forms of the shadowy congregation, as the following verse was sung also—the heart-rending cries—the harrowing groans—the bitter self-accusations—the repentant gestures—and the impassioned prayers that ascended to heaven in their hollow voices—were fearful to conceive, and still more to witness.

"Oro supplex, et acclinis,
Cor contritum quasi cinis,
Gere curam mei finis."

But the climax of horror was reserved for the final verse. It seemed, while the chorus of priests chanted it, and the ghastly crowd took up the sublime strain, as if all the pent-up agonies of grief, and shame, and sorrow, and fear, and death,—all the pangs, mental and bodily, which earth and earth's creatures had

ever felt or known,—were let loose, like a mighty and ungovernable mountain-torrent swollen with the wintry storms, to shake that sacred fane to its very foundation. Thus they sang:

“ Lacrymosa dies illa,
Qua resurget ex favilla,
Judicandus homo reus.
Huic ergo parce Deus:
Pie Jesu Domine, dona eis requiem. Amen.”

There was beating of breasts, and wringing of hands, and tearing of hair—“weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth”—in that tumultuous crowd of prostrate spirits; but there was also the sweet, small voice of hope, the accents of expectant salvation, which, like oil upon the raging waters, ever and anon stilled the clamour of despair, and calmed the agitation of the stricken hearts around.

“Now! now!” whispered a voice in the old woman’s ear. “Haste ye—hence! hence! When the high-priest turns about to give his blessing, flee, or your life is worth naught. Delay—a moment’s delay—is death!”

It was her husband who spoke; and though scarce able to stand erect, with fear and fatigue of body and mind, she prepared to obey him.

“*Dominus vobiscum*,” spake the high-priest, facing about, his back to the altar, and extending his hands in the attitude of prayer, blessing the congregation.

Quick and fast fled the affrighted old woman from the church.

“*Et cum spiritu tuo*.” The response first resounded in her ear, as she passed the porch and gained the graveyard.

She thought that she heard shrieks and cries, as of disappointed rage, behind her; she fancied that a terrible tumult arose in the hallowed pile, as she left the porch, and she persuaded herself that the lifeless crowd which filled it followed her flying footsteps, with shouts, and threats, and imprecations.

Fast she sped, and faster still and faster, as the rush of pursuit reached her ear. She passed like lightning by the gaping graves which stood on each side of her path: the last resting-place of her husband and her children was gained—she stopped a moment.

"Peace be to them!" she breathlessly panted. "May God have mercy on their souls!"

Like the voice of a cataract came the rush of her unearthly pursuers. Again she strains every sinew: the activity of youth is in her aged limbs: the churchyard gates are soon gained; they stood ajar. She dashes at them. The midnight hour strikes. The huge, heavy gates grate on their hinges; she has barely time to clear them; they clap-to with a loud clang. They are close together, and firm as adamant.

The tail of her cloak, however, was caught in the gates, as it streamed behind her in her rapid flight; and the garment itself, torn off her shoulders by the impetus of her combined force and speed, was left there, dangling from them in the breeze.

She reached her humble home, frightened and weary. For seven days and seven nights she was unconscious of the course of events; a high fever had fallen on her brain, through mental excitement and over-fatigue. On the morning of the eighth day she arose from her lowly couch, as though she had never known illness, and proceeded to the church, the scene of her former fright and suffering. Fain would her solitary attendant have dissuaded her from venturing out so soon, but she would hear no argument, and she heeded no entreaty.

In the churchyard, as she traversed it, on every grave was visible to her eye a memento of the past—a minute fragment of the cloak she had left behind in her flight. That where reposed the ashes of her husband and children was without this distinguishing mark of ghostly vengeance.

In seven times seven days from thence she was borne thither herself, and became a tenant of the tomb in that city of the silent. She was buried under the same sod as her husband and children.

"Had her strength been equal to her will," so say the gossips, "and her speed sufficient to have completely cleared the church precincts, she would certainly have lived much longer: but to the circumstance of leaving any part, even of her personal apparel, in possession of the dead," they add, "was entirely owing her quick exit from this world." However, gossips will be gossips to the end of the chapter; and wonders will never cease, so long as credulity can find votaries. Be it so.

POPPELSDORF.

CLEMENSRUHE.

The archiepiscopal palace of Clemensruhe, in the adjoining hamlet of Poppelsdorf, or, more properly speaking, suburb, for it is strictly a suburb of Bonn, has been some time converted into a museum. Our Bishop Burnet* tells an incredible story in connexion with the palace. These are his words:—

“The elector has a great many gold medals, which will give me occasion to tell you one of the extravagantest pieces of forgery that perhaps ever was, which happened to be found out at the last siege of Bonn; for, while they were clearing the ground for planting a battery, they discovered a vault, in which there was an iron chest, that was full of medals of gold, to the value of a hundred thousand crowns; and of which I was told that the elector bought to the value of thirty thousand crowns. They are huge, big, one weighed eight hundred ducats, and the gold was of fineness of ducat gold; but though they bore the impressions of Roman medals, or rather medallions, they were all counterfeit; and the imitation was so coarsely done, that one must be extreme ignorant in medals to be deceived by them. Some few that seemed true were of the late Greek emperors. Now it is very unaccountable, what could induce a man to make a forgery upon such metal, and in so vast a quantity, and then to bury all this under ground, especially in an age in which gold was ten times the value of what it is at present; for it is judged to have been done about four or five hundred years ago.”

All that can be said of this story is, that it is most wonderful, if true.

 THE KREUTZBERG.

Among the curiosities of the vicinity of Bonn, the Kreutzberg ranks foremost. It is a hill, on which now stands a splendid

* “Some Letters, containing an Account of what seemed most remarkable in Switzerland, Italy, &c. Written by G. Burnet, D.D. to T. H. R. B., at Rotterdam. Printed by Abraham Acher, bookseller by the Exchange, 1686.” A curious but somewhat credulous book.

church, formerly attached to a monastery of Servite monks. Though the name properly applies only to the hill, it is also used to designate the church. This appellation, Kreutzberg (Hill of the Cross), is bestowed on it by reason of the numerous crosses marking what they termed prayer-stations in the Roman Catholic Church, which are affixed at various points along the path to the church on its summit. The present structure was erected in the year 1627, on the site of a very ancient chapel, which was supposed by antiquarians to stand on the foundation of an old pagan temple, raised either by the Ubii or the Romans, when they held the adjacent country. The monks try to persuade their visitors, who are many, that their church possesses a *santa scala*, or sacred stairs, containing a portion of those which led to Pilate's judgment-hall, and up which Christ ascended to be pointed out by the Roman pretor to the people of Jerusalem, in the words *Ecce homo*; and they still shew some dark marks imbedded in the marble, which they describe as being stains from the blood of the Saviour. "A trap-door in the pavement," says an intelligent compiler,* "leads into the vaults under the church. They are remarkable for having preserved, in an undecayed state, the bodies of the monks buried in them. They lie in twenty-five open coffins, with cowl and cassock on; the flesh in some is preserved, though shrivelled up to the consistence of a dried stock-fish; they are, in fact, natural mummies. They have been interred here at various times from 1400 to 1713. The church is annually visited by numerous pilgrims, chiefly the rude peasants of the Eifel."

So much for the matter-of-fact description of this strange place.

An ingenious and agreeable authoress† has, however, given such a pleasant description of the scene and its concomitant circumstances, combining so well the fanciful with the real, and shedding over both the graces of an elegant imagination, an easy style, and that *couleur de rose* which, springing from a happy temperament, makes all the productions of her pen so

* "A Hand-Book for Travellers on the Continent—Holland, Belgium, Prussia, and Northern Germany." London: J. Murray, 1836.

† Mrs. Trollope, "Belgium and Western Germany in 1833." London: John Murray, 1834.

delightful to peruse, that it is deemed it will be neither an unwelcome nor an inappropriate contribution to these pages.

"Another day of our stay at Godesberg," pursues this lively writer, "or, at least, the morning of it, was spent in visiting Kreutzberg, a high and very singular hill near Bonn. The road which led to it passed through Poppelsdorf, where some handsome buildings, connected with the university of Bonn, are situated. Every feature in the scenery of this village is beautiful, and the road that leads to the top of Mount Calvary, or Kreutzberg, magnificent.

"The isolated building that stands on the summit of this hill was formerly a convent of Servites; it is surrounded by an ample garden, and contains one of the finest views in the neighbourhood. At present it appears to be occupied solely by peasants; and the only trace left of this once celebrated establishment is the church, which is still considered as an edifice of peculiar sanctity. All travellers are sent to this spot, both to see the wondrous chapel, and to look upon the long-interred, but still undecayed bodies of the monks, which lie in a vault beneath it.

"We met here, as indeed happened to us in many other points of our wanderings, a very agreeable party of Dutch travellers, who, like ourselves, were come to look at the wonders of the place. The rencontre was particularly fortunate upon this occasion, as we had long to wait before the guardian of the tomb returned from an excursion he was making in the neighbourhood. Meantime, however, we had the church to see. Having sufficiently examined its various altars and antique monuments, we were led, by a narrow staircase behind the high altar, to a small chamber above. As there was nothing whatever in the room to gratify curiosity, its only decoration being a few copes and surplices hanging upon the walls, we were at a loss to guess why we were brought there; but after a few moments' delay our conductor opened a door, and led us from the dark, obscure room in which we stood, into a chapel, extremely rich in its decorations, but of a most singular form and arrangement. The entire width of the building (between thirty and forty feet) is occupied by a magnificent flight of stairs, divided into three compartments. The centre one, which occu-

pies about half of the entire space, is of superb Italian marble; this is fenced on each side by a handsome double balustrade, dividing it from the inferior staircases which flank it, and which reach to the outer wall of the building: at the top of the marble stair is an altar, with a large figure of the Saviour suspended over it.

“The door by which we entered was on a level with this altar; and, having stepped to the front of it, I was about to descend the marble flight, when our conductor seized my arm, and exclaimed in French, with much vehemence, ‘These stairs are sacred!’

“I apologised for my indecorous attempt, by stating my ignorance of their history: the offence, I imagine, is not an uncommon one among the numerous heretic travellers who visit the shrine, for he readily accepted the excuse, and proceeded to inform me that three drops of the Saviour’s blood rest upon these holy stones. ‘They fell,’ he said, “from the wounds the thorns had made, and dropped on the steps which led to the judgment-seat of Pilate.’ The morsels of stone which received them are inserted in three of the marble stairs, and are covered by thin plates of gold. This relic, together with the sumptuous marble in which it is lodged, was a gift from one of the Archbishops of Cologne to the monastery of Kreutzberg; accompanied by a bull from the Pope, which hangs near the entrance to the chapel, announcing to all pilgrims who may visit the holy spot, that it is sacrilege to place a foot upon the centre stairs (except for an armed knight, whose armour would prevent him from using his knees); but that, to mount them kneeling, insures plenary indulgence for a year.

“The form of the ceiling is very graceful, and ornamented with fresco painting. On the floor of the building, immediately at the foot of the stairs, are a pair of enormous folding-doors which open upon the forest; through these, in more Catholic times, vast numbers of pilgrims used to pour, at particular seasons of the year, to perform this act of devotion.

“Beneath this chapel is a subterraneous chamber, representing the stable, and all the accompaniments of the nativity. Among the numerous plaster figures which occupy the scene, we recognised our friends, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar, in the act of

presenting their gifts. Every thing about this singular place seems to mark the very extremity of superstitious devotion.

“ The examination of all this took more than an hour, but still the sacristan had not returned. The Dutch party, as well as ourselves, were desirous to wait for him ; for it was, in fact, the sight he had to shew which brought us there : so we walked in the garden, we climbed the tower, we ate cherries, we read every inscription in the church, yet still he came not. At length, much fatigued, but nevertheless steadfast in our determination to wait for him, we all assembled round the high altar, near which was the large trap-door that opened upon the vault ; and having seated ourselves upon the steps and benches round it, endeavoured to beguile, by conversation, the still prolonged absence of the sacristan.

“ I remarked, on this occasion, and, in truth, on every other that gave me an opportunity of conversing with them, that the Dutch are not only extremely courteous in their manner to strangers, but that they are particularly well informed and intelligent. After this observation it will appear like national vanity, if I say that they resemble the English ; but they certainly do so in their passion for travelling, and in the active perseverance of their researches for information. I do not, however, claim these remarks as my own ; they were made to me by a German of high rank, who knew both countries well. He added, that the English and Dutch were often mistaken for each other at the German inns ; ‘ but this,’ he said, ‘ probably arises from the wealth and indifference to expense so remarkable in both.’

“ At length, the person we were all so anxiously awaiting entered the church. I hardly know what we had expected from this sepulchral examination, but it certainly must have been something very different from the reality, for we were jesting and laughing when the man arrived ; and even when we saw the two lads who accompanied him raise the massy door, I believe not one of us felt any portion of the awe which the scene it opened to us was calculated to inspire. The sacristan, with a lighted candle in his hand, descended a dark and narrow flight of steps, desiring us to follow him : I was the first that did so ; and I shall not soon forget the spectacle that met my eyes. On each side of us, as we entered the vault, was ranged a row of

open coffins, each containing the dry and shrivelled body of a monk, in his robe and cowl. They are so placed as to be exposed to the closest examination both of touch and sight; and the remembrance of my walk through them still makes me shudder.

“ The wonderful state of preservation in which these bodies remain, though constantly exposed to the atmosphere by being thus exhibited, is attributed by good Catholics to the peculiar sanctity of the place ; but to those who do not receive this solution of the mystery, it is one of great difficulty. The dates of their interment vary from 1400 to 1713 ; and the oldest is quite as fresh as the most recent. There are twenty-six, fully exposed to view ; and, apparently, many more beneath them. From the older ones the coffins have either crumbled away, or the bodies were buried without them. In some of these ghastly objects the flesh is still full, and almost shapely upon the legs ; in others it appears to be drying gradually away, and the bones are here and there becoming visible. The condition of the face also varies greatly, though by no means in proportion to the antiquity of each. In many the nose, lips, and beard remain ; and in one the features were so little disturbed, that

‘ All unruffled was his face,
We trusted his soul had gotten grace.’

Round others the dust lies where it had fallen, as it dropped, grain by grain, from the mouldering cheeks ; and the head grins from beneath the cowl, nearly in the state of a skeleton. The garments are almost in the same unequal degree of preservation ; for in many the white material is still firm, though discoloured ; while in others it is dropping away in fragments. The shoes of all are wonderfully perfect.*

“ The last person buried in this vault was one who acted as gardener to the community. His head is crowned with a wreath of flowers, which still preserves its general form ; nay, the larger blossoms may yet be distinguished from the smaller ones ; but the withered leaves lie mixed with his fallen hair on either side.

“ Altogether the scene is well calculated to produce a cold

* “ There’s nothing like leather.”—*Old Fable*.

shiver in the beholder; and yet we all lingered over it. There is certainly some nerve within us that thrills with strange pleasure at the touch of horror."

No apology is offered for this extract to the reader, inasmuch as it is at once the most accurate and most graphic account of this strange scene extant.

THE CONCLAVE OF CORSES.

It was in this mortuary cavern that the following strange scene is said to have taken place.

Some three hundred years since, when the convent of Kreutzberg was in its glory, one of the monks who dwelt therein, wishing to ascertain something of the hereafter of those whose bodies lay all undecayed in the cemetery, visited it alone in the dead of night, for the purpose of prosecuting his inquiries on that fearful subject. As he opened the trap-door, a light burst from the vault below; but deeming it only the lamp of the sacristan, he drew back and awaited in silence his departure, concealed behind the high altar. The sacristan emerged not, however, from the opening; and the monk, tired of waiting, approached, and finally descended the rugged steps which led into its dreary depths. No sooner had he set foot upon the lowermost stair, than the well-known scene underwent a complete transformation in his eyes. He had long been accustomed to visit the vault, and whenever the sacristan went thither he was always sure to be with him; he therefore knew every part of it as well as he did the interior of his own narrow cell, and the arrangement of its contents was perfectly familiar to his eyes. What, then, must his horror be, to perceive that this arrangement, which even but that morning came under his observation as usual, was altogether altered, and a new and wonderful one substituted in its stead.

A dim, lurid light, barely sufficing to make "darkness visible," pervaded the desolate abode of death; but it sufficed

also to give to his view a sight of the most singular description. On each side of him the dead, but imperishable bodies of the long-buried brothers of the convent, sat erect in their lidless coffins—their cold, starry eyes, glaring on him with lifeless rigidity—their withered fingers locked together on their breasts—their stiffened limbs motionless and still. It was a sight to petrify the stoutest heart; and his quailed before it, though he was a philosopher and a sceptic too. At the upper end of the vault, at a rude table formed of a decayed coffin, or something which once served the same purpose, sat three monks, one in the centre, and one at each extremity. They were the oldest corses in the charnel-house, for the inquisitive brother knew their faces well; and the cadaverous hue of their cheeks seemed still more cadaverous in the dim, supernatural light shed upon them, while their hollow eyes, ever and anon, gave forth what looked to him like flashes of lambent flame. A large book lay open before the centre one; the others bent over the rotten table as if in intense pain, or in deep and fixed attention. No word was said—no sound was heard; the vault was as silent as the grave; its awful tenants stirless as statues.

Fain would the curious monk have receded from this horrible situation—fain would he have retraced his steps, and sought again his cell, and the companionship of his kind—fain would he have shut his eyes on the awful scene—but he could not stir from the spot, he felt rooted there: and though he once succeeded in turning his eyes towards the entrance of the vault, to his infinite surprise and dismay, he could not discover where it lay, or perceive any possible means of exit. He stood thus for some time. At length, the aged monk in the centre raised his head, and beckoned him to advance. He advanced with slow, tottering steps; he stood in front of the table. The other two monks then raised their heads, and looked at him with a fixed and lifeless look that froze the current of his blood.

“ Oh, ye dead! oh, ye dead! whom we know by the light ye give,
From your cold, gleaming eyes, though ye move like men who live.”

He wist not what to do—his senses were fast forsaking him—the Lord seemed to have deserted him for his incredulity. In

this moment of doubt, and fear, and danger, he bethought him of a prayer; and he prayed fervently to him who holds the earth in the hollow of his hand, and who makes the heavens his footstool. He prayed for strength, and he felt it—he prayed for forgiveness, and he found it—he prayed for his deliverance, and the Lord heard his prayer. At the sacred name of God, the spell which till then had fettered his faculties, was broken; his courage returned as he humbled himself to his Redeemer; he experienced a confidence unknown to his soul before, as his prayer for aid proceeded. He looked on the book: it was a large volume, bound in black, and clasped with bands of gold, and fastenings of the same metal. The character in which it was written was the ancient Gothic—the same as that used by Jornaudes, and the earlier historians of the northern hordes who swarmed to the conquest of the Roman empire; but the language was the pure Latinity of the best ages of that noble tongue. It was inscribed at the top of each page—

LIBER OBEDIENTIÆ.

He could read no further. He then looked, first in the eyes of him before whom it lay open, and then in those of his fellows and coadjutors; he finally glanced around the vault, on the sitting corses who filled every visible coffin in its dark and spacious womb. Speech came to him, and resolution to use it. He addressed himself to the awful beings in whose presence he stood, in the words of one having authority with them.

“*Pax vobis.*” ’Twas thus he spake, in the tongue then used by the clergy, in their intercourse with each other: “Peace be to ye.”

“*Hic nulla pax,*” replied the aged monk on the left of the table, in a hollow, tremulous voice, baring his breast the while: “Here is no peace.” He pointed to his bosom as he spoke; and his interrogator, casting his eye on it, beheld his heart within surrounded by living fire, which seemed to feed on it for ever, but never to consume it. He turned away in affright, but he ceased not to prosecute his inquiries.

“*Pax vobis, in nomine Domini,*” he spake again: “Peace be to ye, in the name of the Lord.”

"*Hic non pax*," the hollow and heart-rending tones of the ancient monk, who sat on the right of the table, were heard to answer.

On glancing at the bared bosom of this hapless being also, the same sight was observable as the former had exhibited; the heart surrounded by a devouring flame, but still remaining fresh and unconsumed under its operation. He turned away once more, and addressed the aged monk in the centre.

"*Pax vobis, in nomine Domini nostri Jesu Christi.*" 'Twas thus he couched his concluding adjuration: "Peace be with ye, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The words were no sooner uttered than that ancient being raised his head, put forward his hand, and shut the book with a loud clap.

"Speak on, brother," said the spirit, in a deep, dull voice; "it is yours to ask, and mine to answer."

The monk felt reassured, and his courage rose with the occasion. It seemed to him as though he were ordained, by the powers above, to effect some inscrutable purpose of the Divine will.

"Who are ye?" he inquired; "who may ye be?"

"We know not," was the answer. "Alas! alas! we know not."

"We know not! we know not! Alas! alas! we know not—know not—know not!" echoed in tones melancholy and sad—in woful cadences, fainter still and fainter, the denizens of the vault, who sat ranged around in their last narrow resting-places. "We know not—know not—know not!"

'Twas like the music of despair.

"What do ye here?" pursued the querist; "what do ye here? why tarry on this spot?"

"We await the last day—the day of the last judgment! Alas! alas, for us! and wo! wo! wo!"

"Wo! wo! wo!" resounded on each side, from the unmoving lips and rigid forms around: "Wo! wo! wo!" gave back the low roof, in unearthly response.

The voice of sorrow was in the wailing tones of words and echo. The monk was appalled at its prolongation. He recovered, however, and proceeded.

“What did ye, to deserve such doom in life? What may your crime be, that deserves such dole and sorrow after death?”

Even as he asked these questions, the earth shook under him, and a crowd of skeletons uprose from a range of graves which yawned suddenly at his feet. The fleshless sockets of each skull glared at the ancient men who sat at the table—the bony fingers were pointed at them—the bare arms were shook in their horrified faces. It was dreadful to see.

“These were our victims,” answered the old monk; “they suffered at our hands: the Lord has avenged them. We suffer now while they are at peace, and shall suffer.”

“For how long?” interposed his interrogator.

“For ever and ever!” was the reply.

“For ever and ever—ever and ever—ever and ever—ever—ever!” died along the vault, in moaning cadences.

“May God have mercy on us!” was all the monk could exclaim, when the skeletons disappeared, the graves closing at once over them; the aged men vanished from his view—the corses fell back in their coffins with a hollow sound—the light fled, and the den of death was once more enveloped in its appropriate darkness.

On his revival, he found himself lying at the foot of the altar; and when he arose and made search for evidence to corroborate his vision, he could perceive no trace of the trap-door having been removed, or the sanctuary of the departed brotherhood having been violated.

The gray dawn of a spring morning surprised him in the performance of this operation, and he was fain to retire to his cell as secretly as he could, for fear he should be discovered.

“From thenceforth he eschewed vain philosophy,” so says the legend; “and, devoting his time to the pursuit of true knowledge, and the extension of the power, and greatness, and glory of the church, he died in the odour of sanctity, and was buried in that holy vault, where his body is still visible.”
Requiescat in pace!

RAMERSDORF.

THE DOOMED DANCERS.

Where the abbey of Ramersdorf now stands, stood also, in the beginning of the eleventh century, a considerable village. In those days there were saints on earth, or, at all events, there were those who were considered such by the popular belief; and the Abbot of Ramersdorf was one of them—perhaps the most celebrated of all the others in his vicinity—for they were always in plenty in those places where the faithful resided. The following tradition, in connexion with one branch of belief in his sanctity—the power of working miracles for evil purposes to his fellow-creatures—is still current among the simple and romantic inhabitants of the neighbourhood of the Seven Mountains.

The sabbath-day drew to a close in the summer tide of the year of grace one thousand and one, and the rustics of Ramersdorf amused them with a dance, as was their wont to do, in the courtyard of the monastery. It was a privilege which they had enjoyed time immemorial, and it had never been gainsayed by the the abbots who were dead and gone: but Anselm von Lowenberg, the then superior of the convent, an austere, ascetic man, who looked with disdain and dislike on all popular recreations, had long set his face against it; and had, moreover, tried every means, short of actual prohibition, to put an end to the profane amusement. The rustics, however, were not to be debarred by his displeasure from pursuing, perhaps, their only pleasure; and though the pious abbot discountenanced their proceedings, their acquiescence was not one bit the more, or their enjoyment one atom the less. Thus stood things at the time in question, when the following occurrence took place.

The day had been very beautiful, and the evening was, if possible, more so. Gaily garbed maidens of the villagery, and stalwart rustics, filled the courtyard of the convent; the rural Orpheus, a blind fiddler, who had fiddled three generations off the stage, sat in front of a group of elders of either sex, who, though too old and too stiff to partake in the active and exciting

amusement, were still young enough to enjoy it heartily. A few shaven crowns—those of the liberal-minded monks—peered from the latticed casements which looked out on to the merry scene. The music struck up—the dance begun. Who approaches? Why are so many anxious glances cast in yonder direction? It is the Abbot.

“Cease your foolery!” he spake to them, in a solemn tone; “profane not the place, nor the day, with your idle mirth. Go hence, and pray in your own homes, for the grace of the Lord to govern ye, for ye are wicked, and wilful, and hard of heart, as the stones.”

He waved his hand, as if to disperse them; but his words and his action were equally unheeded by the dancers and the spectators.

“Forth, vile sinners!” he pursued; “forth these walls, or I will curse ye with the curse!”

Still they regarded him not, to obey his behest; although they so far noticed his words as to return menacing look for look, and muttered threats for threat with him. The music played on with the most impassive liveliness; the dancers danced as though they did it for a wager, or characteristically of their class—

“————— thought to win renown,
By holding out to tire each other down.”

The spectators expressed their approbation of each *tour de force*, and each display of agility made by the saltatory antagonists.

“Well, then,” spake the Abbot, bursting with rage; “an ye cease not, be my curse on your head; there may ye dance for a year and a day. God wills it!”

He banned them bitterly: with uplifted hands and eyes he imprecated the vengeance of heaven on their disobedience; he prayed to the Lord to punish them, for their slight of his directions; and he then sought his cell, to vent his ire in solitude.

“From that hour,” continues the monkish legend, which furnishes forth this tale of wonder, “they continued to dance until a year and a day had fully expired. Night fell, and they ceased not; day dawned, and they danced still; in the heat of

noon, in the cool of the evening : day after day there was no rest for them, their saltation was without end. The seasons rolled over them ; summer gave place to autumn ; winter succeeded to summer ; and spring decked the fields with early flowers, as winter slowly disappeared ; yet still they danced on, through coursing time and changing seasons, with unabated strength and unimpaired vigour. Rain nor hail, snow nor storm, sunshine nor shade, seemed to affect them. Round, and round, and round they danced, in heat and cold, in damp and dry, in light and darkness. What were the seasons—what the times, or the hour, or the weather, to them ? In vain did their neighbours and friends try to arrest them in their wild evolutions ; in vain were attempts made to stop them in their whirling career ; in vain did even the Abbot himself interpose, to relieve them from the curse he had laid on them, and to put a period to the punishment which he had been the cause of inflicting. The strongest man in the vicinity held out his hand and caught one of them, with the intention of arresting his rotation, and tearing him from the charmed circle ; but his own arm was torn from his body in the attempt, and clung to the dancer with the gripe of life, till his day was done. The man paid his life as the forfeit of his temerity. No effort was left untried to relieve them ; but every one failed. The sufferers themselves appeared, however, quite unconscious of what passing—they seemed to be in a state of perfect somnambulism, and to be altogether unaware of the presence of any persons, as well as insensible to pain or fatigue. When the expiration of their punishment arrived, they were all found huddled together in the deep cavity which their unceasing saltation had worn in the earth beneath them. It was a considerable time before sense and consciousness returned to them, and indeed they never after could be said to have them complete ; for though they lived long, they were little better than idiots during the remainder of their existence.

“ So,” concludes the legend, “ the Lord punished disobedience : so,” perhaps, will some among ourselves charitably add, “ should be punished all sabbath-breakers.” God forbid !

THE HOCH KREUTZ.

A HUSBAND'S VENGEANCE.

The Hoch Kreutz (High Cross), on the main road between Bonn and Godesberg, is a remarkable monument of the middle ages. It was erected, according to the best authorities, by Walram von Jülich, the second Archbishop of Cologne of that name (A.D. 1349–50), to commemorate the completion of the noble choir of the cathedral of that city.

The spirit of fiction has, however, consecrated it to itself. Though the cause and time of its erection are placed beyond doubt, still a legendary origin has been given to both, by the active imaginations of the dwellers in its vicinity. This is the tale; it is only a fragment.

“Nay, my Lord, an I hope for salvation, what I tell ye is the truth,” spake an aged woman, to a dark-browed, swart knight, as they sat together in a small turret chamber of the castle of Drachenfels.

This knight was the head of his race—the lord of the castle. The aged woman was his nurse. He had but just returned from that disastrous crusade (the second), in which the flower of the German chivalry had so fearfully perished under the banners of the Emperor Conrad; and he bore on his aspect, and in his bowed form, the impress of the suffering which all engaged in that expedition had endured, from the emperor himself down to the meanest man at arms in the host. Pallid of look, bearded to the waist, and bent nearly double with toil, he wore the appearance of extreme age; yet was he still but little past the prime of life—the maturity of manhood.

“It cannot be—it may not be,” he argued involuntarily with himself, as he hurriedly paced the narrow apartment;—“nay, nay, Bertha, you must be deceived! False to me! nay, confess that you were deceived! Faithless to her husband, even while he fought for the faith of Christ—while he carried the banner of the cross? Nay, nay, I may not credit even thee, my good Bertha! Confess, then, that thou art deceived!”

“The world is worth naught to me, now,” replied the aged

woman ; “ your fair fame outweighs all that exists on earth, or in my imagination. I tell ye, my child—as sure as these withered breasts gave ye the first nourishment ye ever tasted—as sure as we be here together this hour—as sure as God lives—as sure as I love ye, beyond every thing in the world, now that my own dear boys have long been dead ; nay, as I look for mercy from heaven, and have hope in the Most High, so surely I tell ye but the truth. I could not rest till I saw ye—peace I might not know till ye were acquainted with the dishonour wrought your noble name. Now, die when I may die, I shall rest content. My very spirit would have burst from the grave, an ye had not returned before my departure from this life ; such was the desire I felt to inform ye of all I knew.”

“ False ! false ! ” was all the hapless man could utter ;
“ false ! false ! false ! God help me ! ”

“ I was present at her delivery,” continued the aged crone ;
“ they would fain make me swear to keep the secret, but I would not. They threatened me with death, but I cared not for them. What was death to me, for your sake—you, to whom I have been as a mother, ever since the hour of your birth ? They sought to win me by fair promises, and by rich largesses ; but what was gold or flattery to me, in thought of your dishonour ? I swore to myself to tell ye, an I survived to see ye—I have kept my oath. Time passed—you returned not—their fears ceased—they forgot me. You are now here ; and I tell ye once again, that your wife has been faithless to you—that she has borne a son to your betrayer ; and that that son, now a lusty youth, of some seventeen years old, is living on yon side of the river. Where I may not say, for I know nothing further.”

The knight and the ancient dame parted, as they had met, in secret and in sorrow. His was a weary heart that night.

Early the next morning he rode forth, and descending to the banks of the river, and embarking in a small boat, dropped down with the current to Godesberg. The son of his father by a female dependant, a half-witted hanger-on at the castle, followed him as his attendant and guide.

“ Rupert,” said the knight of Drachenfels, breaking silence

for the first time since they had left the castle; "you are sure you know where he abides?"

"Yea, full sure," replied his attendant. "Many and many a time has my lady sped me thither, with missives for the youth. He is a fine boy, and of a noble bearing, I warrant ye."

"Enough!" said his master; "lead on."

They proceeded apace, neither speaking a word; the one for intense anguish, the other for fear of his master.

"I would fain know his description," abruptly asked the knight, as they rode onwards towards Bonn.

"As like to thy ladye wife as child may be to mother," answered Rupert; "fair, fragile, delicate of face and form—long yellow hair, waving adown a swanlike neck, and ever and anon curling over his gentle brow—mark him, beyond mistake. His garb is green, like a free forester's, and he wears a hunting knife and a horn at his girdle. He is a lovely youth, I ween."

"You may return to Drachenfels," said his master; "that will do—delay not."

Rupert, right glad of the permission, wheeled about his horse, and was soon out of sight. The knight rode onward slowly, sad, and silent, and thoughtful.

On the spot where the Hoch Kreutz now stands, he shortly encountered him of whom he was in quest, the living symbol of his dishonour and his disgrace. On the spot where the Hoch Kreutz now stands, he smote with the sword that "sinless child of sin," and poured out his young heart's blood on the green sward, as an offering to the evil spirit of vengeance. And on the same spot, in after years, when time had effaced all bad feelings, and brought peace back again to his soul, he raised that pillar as a memento of his wrong and his crime:

"Of her he loved, of him he slew."

Within twenty-four hours after the fate of the boy became known, there was a death in the abbey of Villich, on the other side of the river: it was that of his frail and faithless, but still pitiable mother. She had lived the life of a recluse, from the time he had attained the age of adolescence; and she now followed him she could not save, and to whom she should never

have given existence, it is to be hoped, to that region "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

An elegant writer has already told this tale in agreeable verse.* It is quoted here with much pleasure:

" It was a Ritter, old and gray,
 Who stood with his bright sword bare ;
 And at his feet a stripling lay,
 All bathed in his life-blood there !
 It was a piteous sight to see
 The youth in his mortal agony !

 But grimly smiled that Ritter old,
 As the red tide ran so fast ;
 And the glazing eye of his victim told
 That the struggle was well nigh past.
 He gazed 'till the boy lay stretched and stark,
 Then strode away through the forest dark.

 There was a nun in Villich fair,
 Who had lived a life of sorrow ;
 They brought her a lock of that stripling's hair,
 And she died upon the morrow.
 This cross was built on the fatal spot—
 More of the tale man knoweth not."

HEISTERBACH.

THE LAST ABBOT.

The ruins of the ancient abbey of Heisterbach has a singular tradition connected with its latter history. It is said that the last abbot cannot die until the last stone of the ruin is removed from its place. The legend adds, that he still lives in the flesh—old, blind, and bent double—and that he nightly

* Planché, "Lays and Legends of the Rhine." C. Tilt, London. Pp. 35. 1832. M. Planché says, that this tradition was communicated to him by a gentleman of Bonn, then resident at Godesberg, and that he had never met with it in print. Neither did the author of this work, although he has searched all the authorities on the subject extant. He has, however, heard it repeated by more than one peasant in the vicinity of Godesberg on many occasions.

paces round the cemetery of the monastery, feeling his way with a long staff, for the purpose of reckoning the graves of his predecessors, that he may ascertain when his own hour of rest shall have arrived. A German poet,* who sings sweetly, has given a version of this story, of which the following is a free translation :

Sadly through yon graveyard creeps
The abbot, old and hoar,
His long beard in the nightwind sweeps,
His heart knows joy no more.

No more he hears—no more he sees,
A long staff guides his way ;
What seeks he there ? why brave the breeze ?
“ He counts the graves,” they say.

And ever as he counts, it seems
As still were wanting one.
He shakes his hoary head, and deems
Next day his race is run.

Not yet is made that couch, his own
Warm tears his wan cheeks lave ;
When yon firm fabric's overthrown,
He'll only find his grave.

Whence he comes, or whither he goes, and when that hour shall arrive, no one knows ; but thus runs the legend of the Last Abbot of Heisterbach.

GODESBERG.

THE BISHOP'S BRIDE.

“ Stranger than fiction,” almost, is the “ truth,” in so far as relates to the history of Gebhard, Archbishop of Cologne, whose fate is so intimately connected with that of the ruined castle, Godesberg. Schiller's graphic account of the man, and the time, and the circumstances of the period, can never be tiresome.

* C. Reinhold.



GODESBURG.

Drawn on Zinc by A. Butler

THE HISTORY OF GODESBURG.

Printed by C. (Lambert) 7 Lincoln's Inn, London.

“ But of greater importance,” pursues he,* “ were two other attempts made by the Protestant party, to extend their influence and their dominion. Gebhard Elector, Archbishop of Cologne, Truchsess of Waldburg by birth, had long felt an ardent passion for the young Countess Agnes von Mansfeld, canoness of the nunnery of Gerresheim; and his passion was not unreturned nor unrequited by her. As the eyes of all Germany were attracted to this scandalous connexion, the two brothers of the lady, both zealous Calvinists,† insisted on the Archbishop’s repairing the honour of their house. So long, however, as the Elector remained a Catholic bishop, this was impossible, and they therefore threatened to wash the stain out in his blood, and in that of their sister, unless he at once renounced her, or led her to the altar as his wife. Gebhard would listen to nothing but the voice of love; all things else were unheeded by him; and, whether it was that the Reformation had affected him too, or whether, as seems most probable, the charms of the lady alone worked the miracle, certain it is, that he abjured the Roman Catholic faith, and married, due in form, the fair Agnes von Mansfeld.

This circumstance was then considered of the highest moment to the Protestant cause. According to the canons of the Roman Catholic church, the Elector, by this act of apostasy, lost all title to the archbishopric, as a spiritual dignity; and if the Catholic party in the diocess could only succeed in deposing him from the spiritual power and dignity, the step was easy to a deposition from the electoral and temporal authority. On his side, the bitterness of a possible degradation from both was much increased by the fact that it would likewise involve a young and tender wife, for whom he had sacrificed all in his own fate. The deposition from the spiritual dignity in such a case was, doubtless, one of the contested articles of the peace of Augsburg; and it was of importance to the Protestant portion of Germany, to win this fourth electorate from the Catholic party. There were recent examples in many parts of the empire, of bishops retaining their sees after renouncing their

* Geschichte des dreissigjähren Kreigs. 1 Thiel. 1 Buch.

† It was on a mission undertaken by him for the purpose of reconciling these brothers, the Counts of Mansfeld, that Martin Luther died.

religion. Many members of the chapter of the cathedral of Cologne were Protestant, and on the side of the Elector; and in the city itself there was a very large and important proportion of Protestant citizens. All these circumstances, combined with the persuasions of his private friends and relatives, and the promises of support which he received from many of the German Protestant courts, induced the elector to come to the conclusion to retain his ecclesiastical as well as his temporal power, although a member of the reformed church, and professing its anti-papal doctrines.

But he was not long in discovering that he had undertaken a struggle to which he was utterly incompetent, and to which there seemed to be no probable end but his own defeat, and perhaps destruction. The tolerance of the Protestant form of faith in the archdiocese of Cologne, was opposed with great bitterness by the states of the principality, as well as by a great majority of the canons of the cathedral; and the interposition of the Emperor in favour of the Catholic religion, together with a bull of excommunication launched against Gebhard by the Pope, at once deprived him of his temporal and spiritual authority, and cast him out from his dominions, as well as from the pale of the church. In this extremity, he raised a strong body of armed men for the purpose of using force, if necessary, to retain both; and the chapter of the cathedral immediately did the same, for the opposite purpose. To strengthen themselves, however, still more, the latter proceeded to the election of a successor to Gebhard; and as it was their object to secure effectual aid, as much as to fill the vacant archbishopric, their choice fell upon the prince, Bishop of Liege, one of the powerful house of Bavaria.

A civil war now commenced in good earnest, which, as it appeared to necessitate a participation in it by the two great parties that then divided Germany, seemed likely to dissolve the peace that, up to that period, had prevailed in the empire. The Protestants were greatly incensed that the pope should have dared to depose an elector of the empire by his mere apostolic authority. In the palmy days of the papal power, such a proceeding had always been opposed by the diets of the empire; how much more should it be so now, in a century which saw

such revolutions, and at a time when the church of Rome rested on such a fragile foundation in the minds of men? All the reformed courts of Germany pressed the matter on the attention of the emperor: Henry the Fourth of France, then King of Navarre, also left no means untried to urge the German princes to assert their rights boldly and bravely. The result would be decisive for the religious liberty of Germany, if carried into effect. Four Protestant votes against three Catholic, in the imperial diet of election, would effectually outweigh the latter; would give the former the preponderance in the election of emperors; and would finally, perhaps, bar for ever the succession of the house of Austria to the empire.

But Gebhard had embraced the reformed, and not the Lutheran religion; and to that circumstance he owed all his subsequent misfortunes. The animosity that existed between both creeds, and pervaded each party, prevented the evangelical people from thoroughly identifying themselves with him or his abettors; and, consequently, they only supported him in appearance, not in reality—gave him the shadow, but kept back the substance. It is true, that the Protestant princes had promised him assistance to a man; but it is equally true, that one alone of their number, the Pfalzgraf, John Casimir, a fanatical Calvinist, had kept that promise faithfully. This prince, with a small force, hastened to form a junction with the elector, then hardly pressed by his enemies; but the activity and power of the newly elected archbishop, aided as he was by the Bavarian court, and the Spanish government in the Netherlands, prevented him from carrying his intentions into effect. The troops of Gebhard, who were discontented because of his inability to pay them, proceeded from murmurs to insubordination, and from insubordination to treachery; and city after city, fortress after fortress, and castle after castle, was surrendered by them to the foe, until there was not a single strong place left him in the territory he so lately swayed. After holding out for some short time in his Westphalian possessions, he finally relinquished the struggle, and fled from Germany. During his exile, he made many ineffectual attempts to excite England and Holland in his favour. In a state of hopeless prostration, he finally retired to Strasburg, where he still held

the office of deacon of the cathedral. In that city he shortly after died—the first offering on the altar of the spiritual restriction, or, rather, on the altar of the discord which prevailed among the German Protestants.

Godesberg was the last fortress that held out for Gebhard, in the territory of Cologne; and it was there, says tradition, that he finally parted from his fair and fond, but erring bride, Agnes von Mansfeldt. It was surrendered to the Bavarians A.D. 1593, and was by them reduced to its present state of ruin.

An elegant writer,* before quoted in these pages, has versified this tradition so sweetly, that the temptation to appropriate it here is irresistible.

COUNT GEBHARD'S LAY.

“ Why droopeth my darling, my beautiful bride?
The bonds which unite us man cannot divide!
Let the light of thy smile but illumine his home,
And thy lover will laugh at the thunders of Rome.
I have cast her proud mitre in scorn from my head;
I have laced on a helmet of iron instead;
Through cope and through stole her keen falchion might wheel,
It will but strike fire from the corslet of steel!

Dost think of the lands for thy love I have lost?
Compared with the treasure, how poor is the cost!
Dost fear that my fondness for thee will decline?
Look out where yon lances are fringing the Rhine!
The haughty Bavarian unfurls for the fray
His banners, with argent and azure so gay:†
My love shall decrease when their blazonry vies
With the snow of that brow, and the blue of those eyes!”

Godesberg is supposed by many to derive its name from the worship of the God Mercury, the Woden of the Saxons and other German people, who, they conjecture, had here a temple erected to his honour: some even go so far as to say that it is the site of the original *Ara Ubiorum*, the exact locality of

* J. R. Planché, F.S.A., “Lays and Legends of the Rhine.” London: C. Tilt, 1832. Pp. 34.

† The arms of Bavaria are *fusily per bend, argent et azure*.

which has so much puzzled antiquarians. But there are others of equal authority in such matters, and of more good sense in all, who derive the name from the *Goding Gerichte*, or *Gau-gerichte*—the open court of justice, generally held under a large tree, in the free air of heaven, by the Teutonic ancestors of the present inhabitants. The ruins, however, which now crown the summit of the hill, are those of a strong castle erected there by Theodore, Count of Heinsberg, the predecessors of Engelbert the Holy in the see of Cologne, A.D. 1208–13; but as that structure was raised on the foundation of another ruined edifice of a similar character, there is no doubt that the occupation of this site is of a much more ancient date. There are still remains of Roman masonry visible in the basement of the circular tower; and the little chapel of St. Michael seems wholly composed of it. The early traditions respecting the spot, go the length of fixing the date of the erection of the first castle in the time of Julian the Apostate, about the period of his second and third expeditions across the Rhine (A.D. 357–359). They are kept in countenance by the legends attached to it; one of which relates how, in former times, it was the residence of a mighty king, who, with a countless host of followers, took up his abode in the neighbourhood. The legend adds, further, that this foreign potentate was in league with the spirits of darkness—that he sacrificed human victims on the altar of his divinities—and that he tyrannised, in the most cruel manner, over the hapless inhabitants of the vicinity. His power, however, it concludes, was completely overthrown by the arrival of a holy Christian priest, who banished his diabolical agents and emissaries, and drove him from the country along with them.

THE SEVEN MOUNTAINS.

We now reach that cluster of volcanic hills known as the Seven Mountains (*Siebengebirge*). Here the romantic in natural scenery commences on the Rhine; and, in the whole course of that mighty river—if we except that portion of it which passes through the Canton of the Grisons in Switzerland,

near its source—there is nothing more magnificent offered to the view. This cluster of mountains forms the *terminus* to the great central chain which crosses Thuringia, the country of Fulda, and Hartz Forest. By a singular anomaly, they are higher here than in the heart of the chain; but that circumstance is easily accounted for, by considering them in connexion with their volcanic origin.

In former times, every summit of this cluster—which, by the by, consists of more than seven—was crowned with a castle; and every castle had, of course, a legend. The castles, in most cases, have crumbled to dust; but the legends still survive—still flourish, fresh, and green, and gay, like ivy-tendrils on a ruined wall: thus proving the immortality of mind, and the perishableness of matter, to whosoever takes the trouble to consider the subject. Of those legends—and “their name is legion, for they are many”—the most striking are selected for these pages. The first mountain which presents itself to view is

THE STRÖMBERG.

Thus runs the legend relating to the little chapel which stands on its peak, dedicated to the prince of the apostles, St. Peter, and called after him St. Peter's Chapel.

In ancient times an old knight, named Rudolf von Isenburg, dwelt in the Castle of Argenfels, a little higher up the river. He had two fair daughters, and no more; and he loved them with all the fondness of a father's pure affection. And he was fully justified in doing so, for they were not only the most beautiful maidens on the Rhine, but they were also the best. About the period when they had attained the full bloom of feminine beauty, the second crusade was depopulating Germany of its bravest barons and gayest knights, and leaving young brides and betrothed virgins to bewail the infatuation of their lords and lovers, in exchanging peace at home and pleasure for toil, and turmoil, and tumult, and strife, under the burning sun of Syria. St. Bernard was then at Spire, engaged in the strange operation, but still most successful, of kindling up the flame of blind zeal in the bosom of a people slow in their nature,

and wholly ignorant of the language in which he addressed them. Among the throng of knights and nobles who abandoned their stately abodes on the Rhine shore and its vicinity, was the young Baron Diether von Schwarzeneck, who dwelt in the Castle of Walkenburg (Cloud Castle), which then stood on that one of the Siebengebirge, or Seven Mountains, which still bears the same name. As he travelled up the right bank of the river with a stately retinue, on his way to Francfort, which was the rendezvous for the crusaders, he was belated in the neighbourhood of Argenfels; and, with the freedom of primitive times and ancient manners, he at once made that castle his abode for the night. Rudolf von Isenburg bade his noble guest welcome, and offered him all the hospitality his house could afford; while his fair daughters, according to the usages of those simple days, waited on the stranger, and vied with each other in their endeavours to entertain him. The calm grace and dignified beauty of Bertha, the elder of the two, won, however, on his heart, more effectually than the joyous manner and sprightly sallies of her younger sister. Before the hour of parting for the night arrived, he felt that, without her, the world was naught to him. He loved her. It was not difficult to perceive that the manly mien, and handsome face and figure of the young knight, had produced a similar impression on the fair Bertha; and with a perfect consciousness of this fact, the lively Nina did all in her power to advance the progress of this mutual passion. Her kind heart felt a pure pleasure in promoting the happiness of her sister, and one whom she saw, with the keen glance of woman, was worthy of her in every respect. Need it be said, that circumstances often annihilate space and time? He was bound to depart next morning; and he felt that a moment should not be wasted. The same feeling was participated in by Bertha; so that, when he urged his suit, he found in her a willing auditor; and when he pledged his troth, he was met with a respondent sentiment. Neither slept much that night; indeed they slept not at all, for it was gray dawn before the sister could persuade Diether to separate from them; and their souls were much too full of each other to find room for slumber. Morning, however, came, and they parted. Diether went forth with a heavier heart than he had entered; and Bertha—how

shall I describe her sorrow? The work of years, under ordinary circumstances, had been effected in her gentle heart within the few hours in which she had conversed with her lover.

Diether proceeded on his journey, and arrived in due season at Francfort. From thence he traversed the centre of Europe, in the host of the Emperor Conrad, passing through the Greek empire in his course, and ultimately arrived in Palestine. But neither the chivalry of the German court, nor the pomp and splendour of the Greek, could efface from his memory the image of his beloved Bertha: in peril and in toil, amidst the eternal Alpine snows, and on the burning sands of Syria, he thought of her, and her alone.

“She was his hope, his joy, his love, his all.”

It is the province of history to tell of the disasters which befel the Christian host, and of the wondrous achievements which they performed, under the command of Frederic Barbarossa, nephew of the Emperor Conrad. In one of those furious and destructive onslaughts which they had to sustain from the Saracenic power, Diether was cut down, severely wounded, and, while in a state of helplessness and insensibility, made captive by the Saracens. For seven long years he languished in a loathsome dungeon in Joppa, loaded with chains, and subject to the daily insults of his ruthless jailors. While thus captive, he had, however, his pleasures as well as his pains. In the darkness of his cell, as well as while under the palm-trees of Palestine, or in the rocky clefts of Lebanon, he still saw in idea his Bertha—young, beautiful, and true as ever; and thus would memory picture to his mind’s eye, “the broad and bounding Rhine,” the vine-covered hills, and gay valleys on its banks, and the old oak that stood in the court-yard of Argenfels; beneath which he had taken his last farewell of his betrothed and beloved. It is natural for a man, when he is in danger or distress, to bethink him of the means to avert or alleviate it. Diether did so. But the only means which his circumstances allowed him to use, was prayer to a power superior to that of his persecutors. He bethought him of the Virgin—in that rude age, the stay and hope of the destitute, the desolate, and the abandoned of the rest of mankind, as her sex ever have been, and ever will

be, while the world is a world; and he vowed a vow to erect a chapel to her honour, if, through her aid, he should again obtain his freedom, and regain his own country and his love. A body of crusaders shortly after assaulted the fortress in which he was confined, and liberated him, with many others, his fellow-captives. He then returned to Europe, along with the wreck of the crusading force. From Venice, the first port at which he landed, he hastened, on the wings of love, over the Tyrolean Mountains, and across the intervenient country to Francfort. Without a moment's unnecessary delay in that ancient city, he set forth on his journey down the Rhine to the abode of his Bertha. His soul was filled with pleasing and painful emotions—with

“ Hopes, and fears that kindled hope,
An inextinguishable throng;
And gentle wishes long subdued,
Subdued and cherished long.”

The quickest form of travelling was far too slow for his feelings; and his impatience to see again his sweet Bertha was not to be repressed by any consideration—not even by a perfect consciousness of the impossibility of proceeding faster than he did. How his heart leaped within him, when, at the bend of the river just below Andernach, his barque hove in sight of Argenfels, the highest towers of which were just visible in the distance, and bore down on that beloved spot as rapidly as oars, and sail, and current could carry it! Nearer and nearer drew the barque, impelled by the current and the breeze, and urged on by the stalwart rowers, encouraged by the promise of rich largess. What does he see? Do his eyes deceive him? Alas, no! The lordly towers of Argenfels were a blackened ruin! Grass grew in the courts and passages of that once noble pile; and beasts of prey, and foul reptiles, made its stately halls their obscene dens and horrid banquetting places.

The story of its fate was soon told.

“ Old Sir Rudolf,” ’twas thus spoke an aged herd, whose scanty flock pastured freely, and at large, on the walls and in the fosse of the building: “ Old Sir Rudolf von Isenburg was slain by a deadly foe, in an unexpected onslaught which was

made on the castle in the dead of night; and the castle itself was then plundered, and afterwards burnt, as you see."

"But his daughters—his daughters!" exclaimed the horror-struck Diether; "where are they? what became of them? what was their fate?—say, quickly!"

The aged herd looked up at the young knight for some moments, as if he either did not comprehend his question, or wished to curb his impatience, by deferring an answer.

"His daughters?" he drawled out; "oh, his daughters!"

Diether's limbs quivered with mental agony; his heart was torn by a thousand pangs.

"His daughters?" continued the old man: "Oh, yes; I now remember; no one knows any thing about them; but they were never seen after."

Sorrowful and heart-sore did Diether turn from the ruins of Argenfels, to his own castle on the Wolkenberg. But now that all hope of his beloved Bertha had fled, this solitude was even more afflicting to him than that of her destroyed dwelling. Many a time did he wish that he had died in Palestine, rather than have lived to return and feel such desolation of spirit. Time, too, but brought increase of pain, instead of assuaging his grief, as it usually does; and he could find nowhere, in no occupation, peace or rest, still less pleasure. At length, worn out with woe, he resolved to abandon the home of his fathers, and build him a chapel and a cell in some lonely spot among the mountains. There, secluded from all intercourse with mankind, to devote the remainder of his days to the service of his Redeemer, was his fixed determination.

Early one morning, shortly after he had come to this resolution, having settled his worldly affairs and dismissed all his domestics, he went forth from his castle to effect his purpose. At that period the base and acclivity of the Strömberg, as well as those of every other of the Seven Mountains, were thickly wooded, even to the very summit. He wandered on, not knowing which way he went, caring nothing for it, and all unconscious of the lapse of time. As he proceeded, however, he lighted suddenly, and quite unawares, upon an open space in the centre of the forest which clothed the mountain, and on which stood a rudely

constructed stone cross. Beside the cross was a small building, which looked like an anchorite's cell. It was to him an oasis in the desert—a resting-place in the midst of the wilderness.

“Here,” said Diether to himself, as he struggled through the tangled underwood; “here is my future abode in this life.”

As he spake thus, two forms emerged from the cell, and, approaching the cross, knelt down in an attitude of the deepest humility, and commenced to pray aloud. They were garbed in long dark gowns, with hoods which completely covered their faces.

Diether was silent. He waited until the pious hermits had concluded their orison.

“Pity me, Lord! pity me!” burst from the lips of one of the prostrate figures.

Diether started at the words. The voice struck on his ear; it was that of an old familiar tone never to be forgotten.

The forms rose slowly from the earth. In the act of doing so, the hood fell from the head of the one, and a mass of long, rich, yellow hair, floated in the breeze.

Diether sprang forward.

“Stay!” he exclaimed; “stay!”

The form turned round at the cry.

“Bertha!”

“Diether!”

“Nina!”

They were all clasped in one embrace.

It was, indeed, his own beloved Bertha and her sister. On the death of their father they had taken to flight, to save themselves from the destroyers of his castle; and, accompanied by one aged retainer alone, to whose care their expiring sire had confided them, they wandered forth. They had succeeded in effecting their escape through the subterranean passages of the castle, and they received no harm in their flight. Their first place of concealment was the hut of a charcoal-burner, in the neighbouring wood. In this retreat they were made acquainted with the death of their father, which they previously knew was inevitable; and the pillage and plunder of their paternal towers, which they also augured, from the intense redness of the sky a few nights previously. Finding, from the statements of the old servant

and the charcoal-burner, that they were not quite safe in their seclusion, as armed men were seen in the vicinity, apparently in search of some fugitives, they betook themselves, in the darkness of the night, to the inaccessible solitude of the Seven Mountains. There, aided by their faithful old servant, they raised that humble cell and the cross before it, on the only cleared spot they could discover. The old man shortly after died.

"Since then," concluded the lively Nina, gaily anticipating her sister, "we have not seen a single man. How miserable!"

Diether smiled at the girl's gaiety and light-heartedness.

"Since then," concluded the graver Bertha; "we have communed with none, save our Creator."

Diether did not find it a very difficult task to persuade the fair Bertha to become his bride, and the mistress of his home. Strange, however, to say, the lively Nina could not be induced, by any arguments, to quit her solitary cell. She was determined, she said, to devote the rest of her existence to the service of God; for that life had no longer any pleasures for her, since she saw her aged sire struck down before her eyes, weltering in his gore—dying—dead! As her resolution was unchangeable, Diether caused a more commodious building to be erected for her; and, in addition to it, he built a chapel to the prince of the apostles, St. Peter.

Bertha and Diether lived happily, and became the parent stock of a long line of Rhenish knights and nobles.

Nina died very soon afterwards; but not, however, before her little cell had become the nucleus of a small nunnery. She lies buried in the chapel.

'Twas said she loved her sister's spouse; but that her gentle nature caused her to sacrifice herself, rather than disturb the happiness of one so dear to her.

This is the legend of the Strömberg.

The true history of the mountain is less remarkable. It was the site of a Roman fortress, if any credit be due to generally received tradition; and it became subsequently the seat of a castle, erected, perhaps, on the ruins of that structure, by a chief of the Ripuarian Franks, and transmitted by him to his Teutonic successors. In the beginning of the twelfth century, a settlement of some monks of the Augustinian order was attempted

here, under the patronage and by the advice of Bruno, Count of Altena, the second of that name, and the forty-eighth Archbishop of Cologne, A.D. 1131-37. It did not succeed, however, for reasons which are not now known. A similar failure, probably from a similar cause, took place in regard to another attempt to settle some Cistercian monks here in 1188, by the Archbishop Philip von Heinsberg, the conqueror of Westphalia (A.D. 1167-1191). The monks found the climate of the mountain too cold and inhospitable for them; so that, after a few months' abode there, they abandoned it for one of the contiguous valleys, where they founded the monastery of Heisterbach. Since then the Strömberg has remained in its present state; it is now a period of nearly seven centuries.

The Strömberg is reckoned to be 1122 English feet in perpendicular height; but some measurements make it less—only 1053 feet.

The next to this mountain is the Nieder-Strömberg, more generally known as

THE NONNEN-STRÖMBERG.

The subsequent legend is related of it.

In those days of darkness and violence which overcast Europe in the middle ages, when might was right, in Germany as well as in every other country in the world, there dwelt in the castle, which then stood on the summit of the Nieder-Strömberg, one of those stronghanded knights who knew no law but his own will, and whose power was as extensive as his means could afford to make it. He had a large family of sons and daughters at one time, but, as he grew old, they all perished around him; the sons, in the scenes of bloodshed and violence so peculiar to the period; the daughters, of various descriptions of disease: all but one, and she was a vowed nun in the neighbouring abbey of Villich. The proud, turbulent old man, thus saw himself cut off from every hope of posterity. But he was not to be baffled of his will, even though heaven was to be arrayed against him on its accomplishment. Having fixed his eyes upon the only son of an ancient race in the neighbourhood, he negotiated with the father of the youth for a marriage between their children; and then,

despite of tears and entreaties—despite the maledictions of the church, the holy horror of the nuns, the protestations of the noble abbess, and the strong objections of the maiden herself—he bore his daughter off by force to his own castle on the mountain.

Matilda—that was her name—had been, from her earliest youth, of a pious, contemplative disposition; and having been brought up with her relation, the Abbess of Villich, from the age of infancy, she felt the greatest reluctance to quit the convent. In truth, she knew of no other home; and she desired to have no other. Her agonies, therefore, may be more easily conceived than described, at this violent disruption of all associations, human and divine; she grieved, and was sorrowful to the death for it; and, like the gentle mourner in holy writ, “she would not be comforted, because they were not.”

It so happened, however, that her destined bridegroom was already in love with another, and that, having no hopes of obtaining the hand of his mistress, he had vowed within himself never to love a woman more. He had, moreover, unknown to his father, abjured the world at the altar of the neighbouring abbey of Heisterbach; and though, with the concurrence of the superior, he still lived abroad in the world, he did so only until the death of his sire should release him from the necessity of simulating appearances, and enable him to place all his patrimony at the disposal of the church. His father, too, like the father of Matilda, was a harsh, hard-hearted man; and being proud, besides, of his ancient lineage, he determined that it should be no fault of his if his name were not transmitted to posterity. Thus matters stood when Albert was made acquainted with the marriage contemplated for him, and commanded to hold himself in readiness to espouse the young nun. It was to no purpose that he adjured the stern old man to desist from his intention; to no purpose did he appeal to his feelings: appeal and adjuration were equally useless; and the only alternative offered him was immediate compliance or the deepest dungeon in the castle, there to rot out the remainder of his life, under the malediction of an offended father. The hapless youth adopted the former proposition, and agreed to the union.

“Father of mercy!” prayed the pious Matilda, on the eve

of her intended nuptials ; “ deliver me from this deadly peril. At any price do I ask it ; for even life itself is naught to me, if my vow be broken ! ”

“ Mary, mother ! ” prayed the afflicted Albert, almost at the same moment ; “ interpose thy powerful aid, and let me die rather than renounce my God.”

Even as they prayed, a sign of hope appeared in the sky ; a white dove hovered for a moment over them, and then flew upwards, where it was lost in the vastness of the heavens.

The morning came. The chaplain of the castle was at the altar of the little chapel, long unused by any of its inmates ; the old baron was by his side ; the weeping Matilda stood before the figure of the crucifixion. In another minute the melancholy Albert entered, following his father. They took their places, the bridegroom opposite the altar, beside his destined bride ; the sire opposite the stern father of the victim. Bride and bridegroom were garbed in a most extraordinary manner for such an occasion ; the former wore her white habit as a vowed nun, and the latter had, for the first time in his life, assumed the long, dark, coarse cassock of a Cistercian monk. Nothing could induce either to adopt another form of dress for the nuptial ceremony. It was a singular and a solemn sight to see ; the one, with her thick white veil concealing her tearful eyes and pallid features ; the other, hiding his troubled traits and care-worn countenance in the deep folds of his uncomely cowl.

The sacred ceremony was performed ; the marriage was complete, all save the usual responses. The profligate chaplain, as well as the proud, violent, hard-hearted parents, awaited impatiently the final words. At this moment the bride and bridegroom, as if impelled by an unseen power, involuntarily held forth their hands to each other, and clasped them firmly.

“ *In te, Domine, speravi,* ” spake the gentle Matilda, in a voice which thrilled through the hearts of the hearers.

“ *Non confundar in æternum,* ” responded Albert, as if animated by the same impulsive spirit.

“ *Amen,* ” echoed around the walls of the chapel. The voice of some invisible being seemed to fill the surrounding space.

Even as the words were spoken, the earth yawned at the foot of the altar, and bride and bridegroom disappeared in the deep chasm. A chorus of celestial sounds floated in the air, as the gulf closed over them; and their souls, linked hand in hand, were seen ascending to the throne of mercy and of grace.

The chaplain fled from the chapel, howling like one possessed; the next morning he was found dead at the foot of the mountain.

The cruel sires died off shortly after; and the name of each died with him. Neither left scion, of the remotest degree, to tell to future times that their stock had ever existed. Their possessions were wasted and destroyed, even in their brief lifetime; and their very castles crumbled to ruin over their heads, before the frail wrecks of their own forms had found a resting-place.

Since then, tradition tells us, the mountain of Nieder-Strömberg has been called Nonnen-Strömberg.

The Nieder or Nonnen-Strömberg is said to have been crowned by a Roman fortress also, built, according to tradition, by the Emperor Valentinian (A.D. 368). There are no remains of it now in existence.

This mountain is reckoned to be 1066 English feet in perpendicular height.

DRACHENFELS.

The Drachenfels—literally, the Dragon's Rock—is, to English readers, the most interesting of the Seven Mountains, from its association with the muse of one of our greatest poets, Lord Byron. It is, however, as an object of admiration, in a picturesque point of view, perhaps not less interesting. There is none of them which presents such striking features to the eye of the spectator; none of them, in which the elements of sublimity and beauty are so largely blended.

Of the countless legends and traditions which necessarily attach to this most romantic spot, the two following possess, perhaps, the greatest share of general attraction. The first bears relation to the hero of the "Nibelungen Lied," the oldest and most singular modern epic poem in Europe, "Siegfried the Horned;" the second, to the period when Christianity was first propagated on the Rhine by the Briton Winfried, or Boniface,

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DRACHENFELS.

Published by F. C. Westley, Chisols Place Temple Bar



ROLANDSECK & NONNENWÖRTH.

Published by F. C. Westley, Chisols Place Temple Bar

Bishop of Mainz, contemporary and friend of Charlemagne. An opportunity will be taken, in the course of this work, to give entire the story of the Nibelungen, only glanced at in the notes of the subsequent legend.

SIEGFRIED, THE DRAGON-KILLER.

The Lord of the Nibelungen, Siegfried great,*
Hath left his father Siegmond's home in state :
He whom the bards have hymn'd, the priests have praised ;
He in whose honour every voice is raised ;

* The Nibelungen were, or rather are, supposed to have been a tribe of the old Burgundians, " a warlike and numerous people of the Vandal race (says Gibbon, in his ' Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,' cap. 25), whose obscure name insensibly swelled into a powerful kingdom, and has finally

Why fares he forth at distance, and through danger,
With twelve true knights alone, to the land o' the stranger?

His heart impels him to far Burgundy.*
Oh, that the book of fate he could but see!
He wends him thither for Chriemhilda fair;
Fain would he win the great king's daughter there.
Joyously greets he now the Rhine's mid shore,
And hails the huge Seven Mountains towering o'er.

"Let us"—thus spake he to his warriors true—
"Our ancient plight with Childerich renew!†

settled on a flourishing province." They separated themselves from the parent stock about the time the latter overran the Roman Empire (A.D. 300–400); and settled on the banks of the Lower Rhine. Xanten, near Cleves, now in Holland, was the seat of their government. Very near the era of Arthur, King of England,—the fifth century,—Siegmond, their king, held his court in that city; and Siegfried the Horned, his celebrated son, was born there. "Der Nibelungen Lied," one of the oldest epic poems in modern language, is almost exclusively occupied with the feats of Siegfried, who bears also the honourable cognomen of the Dragon-Killer. A large portion of another old German epic, of nearly equal antiquity, "Wieland der Schmidt," (Wieland the Smith), is likewise devoted to the deeds of this hero, who is uniformly represented as a young giant; or, perhaps, more properly speaking, an incarnation of human strength and power.

* In the year of our Lord 407, the Burgundians, of the same stock as the Vandals, broke forth from their settlements between the Oder and the Wesel, and overran a great portion of Gaul. Helvetia, Savoy, Dauphiné, the Lyonnais, and Franche Comté, were erected by them into an independent monarchy; Lyons and Geneva being alternately the seat of government.—*HERRMAN. Allgem. Geschichte.*

† The Franks, a German people, composed of several tribes,—the Chauci, the Sigambri, the Bructii, the Chatti, &c.—deriving their name from the circumstance of their freedom, had settled on the Lower Rhine about the middle of the third century, and had there continued until their irruption into Gaul, about the middle of the fifth century. They were, subsequently to their settlement there, divided into two races, the Ripuarian and the Salique Franks; each of which was governed by a supreme monarch, elected by the feudatories of the kingdom. The territory of the Salique Franks comprised the northern portion of the Roman Belgium; that of the Ripuarian Franks, the land lying between the shores of the Rhine, the Maas, and the Mosel. Clodio, or Chlodion, is the first king of the Franks on record. Merovæus, the founder of the Merovignian dynasty, was his successor, A.D. 437; and Childerich, who was subsequently deposed, followed, A.D. 456–81.—*HERRMAN. Allg. Gesch.*; *GIBBON, Decl. and Fall*; *MONTESQ. Esprit des Lois.*

See ye his palace yon, with grape-vines wreathed ?
Catch ye the fragrance from its flower-beds breathed ?
Him many a kindly speech my sire has sent :
Within his halls be till the morrow spent."

He ceased : and to the king's abode they turn.
But there no longer brilliant torches burn ;
No longer greets the ear the voice of song ;
Solitude seems to sit its towers among.
Along its silent courts the sad winds moan ;
Siegfried finds the monarch all mute and lone.

The old king's trembling arms can scarcely hold,
In kindly clasp, the hero young and bold :
Thorough the long gray locks which shade his eyes,
His stanch friend's son he scarce can recognise.
Sorrow and age have bowed his noble form ;
He soon will be a banquet for the worm.

" I greet thee, potent prince," spake Siegfried, free ;
" How comes this cloud of grief, methinks I see,
Upon your brow ? You rule the Franks so brave :
Their troth is thine — what more may mortal crave ?"
" Alas !" the old king answered, " that I live !
To lay me down and die, what would I give ?"

" Once on a time, O king ! the voice of song,"
Thus Siegfried, " echoed aye these halls along ;
Even as the stately swan o' the glassy water,
Floated its tones in praise of thy fair daughter.
Where braids Gunhilda now her golden hair ?
'Tis years since I beheld that maiden rare."

Slowly and sad the old king heaves his hand,
And points it upward, where the mountains stand.
" Alas, and wo is me !" he sigh'd ; " no more
Dwells here my darling daughter—all is o'er !
Deep in a cavern, in yon rude rock's breast,
In chains she lies, by magic power opprest.

" The tale is sad." " Oh, tell it !" Siegfried cries ;
" Sir Hunold—he whose towers touch yonder skies—

Lord of the Drachenfels, long wooed my child :
 But he was fierce, she as a dove was mild.
 She loved him not—unheeded was his wooing ;
 And he, the wizard vile ! then vowed her ruin.

“ It boots to tell not how his end he gained ;
 Suffice it, in yon cavern now she’s chained :
 While he, in semblance of a dragon fell,
 Watches her day and night—the spawn of hell !
 Full fifty knights, in her rescue, he’s o’erthrown ;
 Who saves her, shall divide with me my throne.”

Then gravely thus the Nibelungen’s lord,
 “ To meet that dragon I may well afford ;
 One I’ve already slain*—’twere odd, in sooth,
 If for another I had any ruth.
 What though Chriemhilda’s court my presence lack !
 Comfort thee, king ! I’ll bring thy daughter back.”

With gladdened soul, and glance of ancient fire,
 Folds the young hero to his heart, the sire.
 “ If on this earth,” he cries, “ there lives the one
 To slay that fiend, ’tis thee—the deed is done !
 Thou—thou, my Siegfried, thou alone art he !
 Oh, blest for ever shall thy coming be !

“ And winn’st thou her, and wilt not have the prize—
 My throne partake—drink rapture from her eyes ;
 A hundred of my starkest steeds shall be
 Laden with my richest treasures—all for thee.”

* According to the “ Nibelungen Lied,” “ Wieland der Schmidt,” and other veridical authorities of equal historical value, Siegfried, when little better than a boy, and still learning the craft of an armourer and sword-smith, along with several other young princes and nobles of the north, from Mime, a celebrated worker in iron of the time, resident near Xanten on the Rhine, slew Faffner, a magician, his master’s brother, who dwelt in the woods of Toxandria, close by the capital of the Nibelungen, and usually assumed the shape of a fierce dragon. The legend runs, that Mime, afraid of the young giant’s strength, sent him on a simulated errand to his formidable brother, to the end that he might be made away with, and no more trouble be had from his turbulence ; but that his plan was defeated, as it has been already related.

Siegfried the offer waved, with friendly word;
For was not his the Nibelungen's hoard?*

The monarch bids the stream of music flow;
Quick round the festal board the goblets go.
High at his side sits Siegfried over all;
The guests enjoy the banquet till they fall.
'Twas late that night ere he his pillow press'd,
Or gentle slumber lulled him to soft rest.

But yet, by time the day had dawn'd, was he
Fully equipp'd, in all his panoply.
His steed he strides† — the palace leaves — anon
Upward he spurs — and now the rock he's won.
The towers of "holy Coeln"‡ glance afar;
And dim i' the west is seen the morning star.

* The Nibelungen hort—hoard or treasure—cuts a conspicuous figure in the ancient epos, "Der Nibelungen Lied," already alluded to. It belonged to the magician Faffner, who was slain by Siegfried; it was composed of countless heaps of gold and precious stones; and it fell to the conqueror on the death of its guardian. Led by a nightingale, who seemed to watch over the fate of the young hero, he sought it in a deep forest in the Nibelungen land, and found it guarded by dwarfs, and gnomes, and other fanciful beings. Alberic, their chief, had for offensive weapon only a golden whip. A brisk battle ensued between them, in which Siegfried found as much as he could do to sustain himself against the dwarfs' scourge. Victory, however, declared herself for him; and the dwarf prince had his life on conditions. These conditions were, his aid and assistance to win the hoard. A fearful giant was next to be encountered; his name was Wolf-grambar: he was taller than the tallest pine in an alpine forest; and his weapon was an immense iron bar. Siegfried conquered him of course; but not without considerable trouble, says the story. The result of his labours was, however, the acquisition of the Nibelungen treasure, and with it, what was still more prized by him, the sword Balmung, the best blade ever forged, and the tarn-kappe, or magic cap, which made the wearer invincible, by rendering him invisible. — *Nibel. Lied.* &c.

† "The best steed that ever a warrior's stable bred—the strong Grani, swift as the wind—stole Siegfried from his master Mime's stall, and sped forth." — *Nibelungen Lied.* This was subsequent to the death of Faffner, the dragon-magician.

‡ Cologne, in the middle ages, was commonly called the Holy City; and was considered only second to Rome itself, in sanctity. "The crowd of churches and religious foundations so increased in the middle ages," says the historian of the Rhine, "and their number became so great, there being

The fields of Orient lie i' the light beneath —
 Blandly the breezes through the foliage breathe.
 Siegfried, undaunted, lance in rest, draws near
 That cavern dank—that den of death and fear.
 “ Monster, come forth !” he cries ; the cave resounds :
 Hissing and shrieking forth the monster bounds.

It was a sight the stoutest heart to chill :
 Sufficed the dragon's look almost to kill.
 Back leaped Sir Siegfried, in affright, I ween,
 For never aught so loathsome had he seen ;
 And were he not all heart, from foot to head,
 The aspect of such foe had felled him dead.

Sparkled his eyes, like coals from hell's own fire ;
 Pestilent vapours from his throat expire.
 A thousand coils his tortuous tail contains :
 Echo his roar the valleys and the plains.
 And, as he shrieks and tears the trembling ground,
 The woods and rocks are groaning all around.

Rises erect a rugged mane, all down
 His narrow neck, and back of murky brown :
 Like a portcullis gapes his awful jaws,
 His fangs are swords—huge hooks his fearful claws ;
 His deadly crest with venom swoln, so wan,
 Heaves its misshapen mass o'er horse and man.

A prayer to heaven the hero puts, and then
 Begins the battle. Dreadful 'twas, I ken.
 The dragon, in a reek of hellish hue,
 Envelopes him : he wists not what to do.
 His lance is broke, his strength is gone—oh, woe !
 A moment more, he's crushed !—Is it not so ?

Not so !—He springs beside the gaping jaws ;
 His trusty blade—bright Balmung*—quick he draws ;

very nearly as many churches and chapels within the walls as there are days in the year, that it is little to be wondered at that it should have obtained the name of the Holy City.”—*Vogt. Rhein. Geschichte, &c. Dritter, Band. s. 270-1.*

* This weapon has already been adverted to in a preceding note.

That well-tried sword, which none of mortal mould,
Without to shrink, unsheathed, might well behold.
The fair Gunhilda, too, comes then in sight,
Clasping her lily hands in piteous plight.

Stern in his stirrup stands he — onward dashing ;
Bright o'er his head his burnished blade is flashing :
A thunderbolt might do no more at best,
Than did its crash upon the dragon's crest.
Ten thousand bulls match'd not the monster's roar ;—
Ere the broad sun arose the fight was o'er.

'Tis o'er. Gunhilda's thraldom now hath end.
Downward to hell doth Hunold's dark soul wend.
From out that cavern's gloom* the lovely May,
Flits as although she feared the light of day.
To her deliverer holds she forth her hand ;
Mute and amazed, a moment does he stand.

Bedecked her graceful form a garb of white,
Her long hair rolled in waves of yellow light ;
Twin tears—twin pearls—stood in her soft blue eyes,
Even as the dew at dawn o' the violet lies.
A gentle sigh just heaved her swanlike breast,
But on her face sweet smiles of joy did rest.

“ Soon shalt thou see thy sire !” the hero said.
Then on his steed he sets the blushing maid ;
And hastes adown the mountain-brow ; but ere
They'd measur'd half, the good old king draws near.
Quick as he may he toils with tiresome gasp,
His long-lost child in his fond arms to clasp.

Anon he holds her to his aged breast ;
To her deliverer then his thanks express'd.
Full fain had both detained him in soft guise,
But vainly—forth the restless Siegfried flies.—

* The cavern in which the old Rhenish Dragon, from whom the Drachenfels is said to take its name, had his den, is still pointed out by local *cicerone*, under the sanction of immemorial tradition. It is on the south-west side of the rock, considerably below the ruins of the castle which crown the summit of the mountain.—*Rheinische Sagen-Kreise*, &c.

In silence vows the fair maid, that no other
Shall ever wed the daughter of her mother.

Honoured and loved—loved, honoured—Siegfried goes
From thence—from friends—to find, alas ! but foes.
Musing upon the fair Gunhilda's beauty,
A tear-drop tells him he forgets his duty.*
From far he greets the broad Rhine's verdant shore ;
Alas ! alas ! he'll never greet it more.

Oh, had he but among the Franks remained !
Oh, had Gunhilda's charms his soul enchained !
He had not fallen by traitor's hand.† Shall I
Sing how his bride he won ?—how came to die ?—
No ! mute be my lyre !—Another time, may-be,
Unto his fate I'll tune my minstrelsy.

* Siegfried, it will be remembered, was at this time on his journey to the Burgundian court, to woo and win the fair Chriemhilda's hand. He appears to have been a sad fellow among the women ; for, shortly after he destroys the magician Faffner, and acquires possession of his own liberty, we find him in the frozen regions of the North, at the court of the King of Iceland, successfully suing for that monarch's beautiful daughter Brunhilda.—*Nibelungen Lied*, &c.

† Siegfried was slain in the chase, near Worms, at the instigation of Brunhilda, while he stooped down to drink at a cool fountain. The circumstances were nearly as follows. Gunther, King of the Burgundians, who held his court at Worms, wooed and won Brunhilda as his bride ; but in consequence of her love for Siegfried, she would not permit him to consummate the marriage the first night ; and the extraordinary strength with which she is represented to have been endowed, was employed by her for that purpose. This circumstance came to the ears of her former lover Siegfried, now the admirer and admired of Chriemhilda, the king's sister ; and he charitably undertook to remedy it. Putting on his tarn-kappe, he entered the nuptial chamber on the second night, with the cognizance of Gunther, and exchanging places with him, after a fierce and dangerous struggle with the Amazon, succeeded in making her cry quarter. At that moment he again changed places with the king, and left him to the enjoyment of his troublesome bride. It was, however, the most unfortunate act of Siegfried's life : for Brunhilda learning, subsequently, the trick which he had played her ; and likewise animated with mortal jealousy of his spouse Chriemhilda, bribed Hagen, one of her wicked counsellors, to slay him in an unguarded moment. Hagen treacherously thrust him through with his own spear, as he stooped to drink at a fountain, heated with the toils of the chase ; first, however, taking the precaution to remove his sword Balmung out of his reach. Thus perished Siegfried the Horned ; according to the "*Nibelungen Lied*," &c.

The second legend, it has been already stated, is connected with the period when Christianity was first propagated on the shores of the Rhine and in the circumjacent country: but it should also be added, that it is the one of the two which has become most popular in the annals of local tradition, though not more beautiful than the former, and having far fewer claims to remote antiquity. There are many versions of this legend current in the country, but none of them is more common in the mouths of the many than that which is here presented to the reader. Whether the story has any foundation in fact, like most of those traditions of the middle ages, which have been traced to their true source, or, whether it be pure human invention, the author of these pages has scant means and little desire to ascertain: he has no wish to disturb the fond illusion of ages by letting in the cold light of historical research on the subject.

Thus it runs in the rude original. In the olden time a grisly dragon had his den in the great cavern of the Drachenfels, where he received divine honours from the heathen inhabitants of the vicinity. The usual sacrifice offered to propitiate him was a human being. Captives of every class were generally selected for the obscene maw of the monster; but those who were made prisoners in battle or in foray, were deemed the most acceptable to his peculiar taste. Among the hapless beings who were in the latter predicament, was a young, and beautiful, and high-born Christian maiden. She was captured in a descent made by the mountaineers on the adjacent villages in the plains, where about that period the belief in a true God had begun to be common amongst the inhabitants. Like Briseis in the "Iliad," two conquerors contended for the possession of her person; but, unlike that fair cause of commotion in the Greek camp, she had no willing participation in the deadly strife which ensued between them. Both claimants had their partizans; and their quarrel threatened a dismemberment of the tribe.

"This must never be," concluded the ancients, in a council called to appease the feud, and at which each of the claimants attended.

"She is mine," urged the one.

"I won her," cried the other.

"Silence!" said the senior, gravely, rising and waving his shrivelled hand. "She is not yours—she is not ours—she is our God's—she is from henceforth the property of the mighty dragon."

The other old men applauded this cruel decision ; and, as the contending parties could no longer prefer any pretensions to her, they applauded it also. Preparations were accordingly made to hand her over to the monster ; and certainly never yet was there a more beautiful peace-offering to the foul spirit of intestine discord. Garbed in a long flowing white robe, and covered with a garland of the fairest flowers, she was conducted at sunset up the steep, stony side of the mountain, as close to the cavern of the loathsome deity as his wretched worshippers dared approach. As they toiled up the rugged mountain path, the elders recited a rude ditty, the crowd taking up the *refrain* in a monotonous and melancholy cadence. Thus they chanted :—

**" With garland crown'd, enwreathed in fair flowers,
Alas ! and wo is thee !
We bear thee where yon fearful dragon glowers,
Alas ! and wo is thee !
Stark for thy love is many a hero lying,
Alas ! and we are we !
Our fields, even now, with their best blood they're dying,
No joy we know for thee !
Then, Christian maiden !— more thou'lt injure never—
Alas ! and wo are we !
The Drachenfels be now thy bier for ever !
Thither we hie with thee ! "**

The effect of this dismal chant was singularly saddening ; and many of the funeral throng wept the sacrifice of beauty to peace, and humanity to political expedience, as its echoes rolled heavily over hill and dale, through all the valleys of the Seven Mountains. Slowly and solemnly they halted at their destination,—the spot to this day known as “ the Dragon’s Den.” There she was bound to a blighted tree, and abandoned to her fate, amidst the songs of triumph and shouts of devotion of the departing crowd. It was a dreadful moment for her when the last echoes of their receding voices died in the distance. No hope of earthly aid now remained longer : to heaven, then, alone

she humbly looked for succour and assistance; or for an alleviation of the bitter pangs of death.

The sun set gloriously in a mass of refulgent clouds, and the yellow moon uprose, filling the lovely valley which lay stretched below, far and wide as eye could reach, with its pure and holy light. Midnight approached, but it came, alas! with the lingering pace of painful years to the agonized mind of the maiden. Still, however, she placed her trust in God, and calmly awaited the moment when her spirit, disunited from the flesh, should be freed from persecution, and fly to join his saints in those regions of the blessed where all is peace, and love, and purest happiness.

At the hour of midnight the monster emerged from his den, making a horrible noise, and rushed with all the eagerness of insatiate appetite towards the spot where she stood bound, his lovely and unresisting prey. The furious beast made as though he would devour her in one morsel, and his hideous jaws gaped wide for the purpose; but all of a sudden he stopped short, as if struck by a thunderbolt, and then fled backwards with a most awful outcry and a horrid hissing. Twice, thrice did he essay to seize her; each time, however, more ineffectually than before. What was the cause of his impotence to injure his gentle victim? The maiden bore on her breast a little cross; and the fiend had no power over one who was guarded by that sacred symbol of our redemption.

Frustrated in all his efforts—wild with disappointed rage—maddened with unsated appetite—and overpowered by infernal passions, the monster flung himself over the precipice, and was never heard of more.

The maiden thanked God, as well she might do, for her happy deliverance, and prayed fervently for His further blessing and protection.

Next morning the mountain was thronged with a curious crowd, who came to witness the catastrophe of the dreadful tragedy, which they deemed to have occurred over-night, and to collect the remains of the murdered victim for inhumation. What their wonder was at beholding the maiden unharmed and full of holy confidence, in place of finding only her mangled limbs and fleshless trunk, may be more easily imagined than related.

"A miracle! a miracle!" shouted they one and all.

"A miracle! a miracle!" echoed in a million voices the multiplied echoes of the Seven Mountains.

The elders fell at her feet and worshipped her; but the maiden bade them rise, and told them not to fear. She then related to them all that had passed.

"Her God is greater than our god," said the chief of the elders; **"let us worship Him alone."**

"Let us worship Him! let us worship Him alone!" echoed the admiring multitude.

"Worship Him alone! worship Him alone!" echoed the mystic voices of the valleys and the mountains.

The fickle crowd now unbound the maiden, and led her adown the rugged side of the mountain; triumphant and exalted now above all, along the road where she had been so recently the fearful sacrifice offered to a loathsome monster, and from the spot where she had been abandoned of the world. They entreated her with one accord to instruct them in the Christian faith, and to be thenceforth their ruler. She sent, accordingly, to her own home for pious priests to undertake the office of teachers; and assumed, at the desire of the tribe, the full sovereignty over them.

On the same day that she was proclaimed queen of this people, the ancients, and the chiefs, and the principal warriors, were baptized in the Rhine; and from thence, and ever since, Christianity has been the religion of that part of the country.

A chapel to the honour of the Saviour was built on the place where the maiden had vanquished the dragon by the symbol of His sufferings, in commemoration of that wonderful event; but it has crumbled before the touch of time, and for ages past not a fragment has existed to tell with aught like certainty where it stood. Tradition, however, the foster-child of time, still points out the alleged locality; and many a soft heart has thrilled, and many a bright eye been dimmed with a tear, as they looked on the spot and remembered this legend.

THE WOLKENBERG.

The Wolkenberg (Cloud Mountain), the next which claims attention of the Siebengebirge group, is not one of the least

interesting among them. It is also known as the Wolkenburg, or Cloud Castle, because, says Schreiber, "in former times there was likewise a castle at the top of this mountain, which was often covered with fogs and clouds, and thence derived the name of Wolkenburg (Cloud Castle)."

This is the tradition which attaches to that castle, now only existing in the popular imagination. It is a stirring tale.

THE FATE OF THE FAITHLESS.

In ancient days, when the Roman empire succumbed under the swarms of barbarians from the North, which fell upon it like a cloud of locusts on a fertile soil,—when the Franks and the Germans divided northern Europe, as it were, between them, a noble knight of the former people inhabited the strong castle which then crowned the summit of the Wolkenberg. His name was Walter, and his power was great as a chief,—his reputation high as a warrior.

At this period the Franks were divided into two distinct tribes, the Ripuarian and the Salique; the former inhabiting Northern Belgium, the latter the shores of the Rhine, from the canal of Drusus, near Nymüegen, to the Mosel,—on both sides of the river. Walter, the hero of this tradition, was of the latter. As the greatest unity then subsisted between the heads of the two tribes, there was, consequently, a considerable intercourse among them; and, as a result of this intercourse, our hero is found, at the outset of the story, in the court of the Ripuarian monarch, at Xanten, close by Cleves. This sovereign, like Jephthah, judge of Israel, had

" One fair daughter, and no more,
The which he loved passing well : " *

and on her account was his palace the resort of the young and the brave, and the witty and the wise, from all quarters of France and Germany. Among her numberless suitors, however, there was

* " *Hamlet.*—*O, Jephthah, judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou !*

Polonius.—*What a treasure had he, my lord !*

Hamlet.—*Why—' One fair daughter, and no more,*

The which he loved passing well.'

Polonius.—*Still on my daughter.*

[*Aside.*"]

Hamlet, Act ii. Sc. ii.

one who had the preference of the maiden and the particular approbation^l of her sire. He was only son to the king of the Salique Franks; and had come from his home on the shores of the Upper Rhine to sue for her hand. The maiden's troth was plighted—the day was fixed for their union—and all manner of preparation was made to greet this auspicious junction of the two races. At this time it was that Walter appeared at her father's court, attracted thither as much by the anticipated festivities, the news of which had been spread far and wide, as by the fame of Helgunda's wondrous wealth and beauty.

Walter saw the princess;—to see her was to love her. His active mind immediately set about devising the means to make her his own. In the middle of the night, the first of his arrival, he ascended the towers of the palace, and having purchased the permission of the warden, sang so sweetly beneath her chamber window, that her soul was ravished with delight. The next eve his serenade was repeated, and for six successive nights the maiden was alternately enraptured with his melody, or overcome with his grief.

“Who is this that sings so tenderly of love and truth?” asked the princess of her favorite damsel, one morning at her toilette; it was the morning of the seventh day.

“I wist not, noble lady,” replied the damsel; “but the warden will tell me, and I inquire by your leave.”

“Go, then, and God speed thy errand,” sighed the princess.

The damsel went forth, and soon returned with the desired intelligence. The warden was her lover, and he could not, therefore, refuse her any thing. The princess was quickly made acquainted with the name of the love-lorn minstrel, and from that moment she desired her betrothed no longer. That night Walter sang not in vain; nor did he sing so long as he was wont: for Helgunda's hand-maiden cut short his minstrelsy by a welcome invitation to her lady's bower; and he entered the abode of hope and joy a happy man. Until the morning dawn the lovers remained together, and then they separated with sighs and tears, and vows and promises, as young people usually do at the first blush of the tender passion.

In seven days thereafter, however, Helgunda was to espouse the young Salique prince; such was the will of her sire, a will not

to be gainsayed by any one. What was to be done? Walter was bold, and the princess was desperate ; so they agreed to quit the palace together, and flee to his castle on the Wolkenburg. On the eve of the morrow, when the nuptial ceremony was to have been celebrated, they had passed, disguised, through a secret portal, and hastily bent their course towards the ferry on the Rhine most distant from the royal palace.

But their flight was not unnoticed, nor did they escape unpursued. They had just reached the ferry, when they heard the quick, hard tramp of a horse, in full gallop behind them.

“ Robber ! ” shouted a voice, which she at once recognised as that of the deserted prince ; “ stay, stay ! ere ye will have her, ye must win her first. Be she to the victor ! ”

Walter at once stopped short in his flight : reining up his foaming steed, and consigning Helgunda to the care of the ferryman, he addressed himself to the battle with their pursuer. It was a fierce and a fearful combat. Victory for a long while hung doubtful in the balance, but at last it o’er fell to the side of Walter. The prince was vanquished, and left for dead on the field. The happy pair then pursued their dangerous journey unmolested. They reached the Wolkenburg in safety the same night.

It was a good year from the occurrence of this event, when the prince, who had recovered of his wounds in the meanwhile, forgetful of his defeat, and remembering only the injury that had been inflicted on him, at the head of a large body of troops laid waste the territories of Walter with fire and sword, and threatened to assault his “ cloud capt ” castle. Walter hastily collected his vassals and retainers, and went forth to the encounter with this formidable enemy. A deadly conflict ensued between them, and again the hapless prince was defeated. This time, however, he was more severely punished by his conqueror than he had been before ; for whereas, in the former case, he had only been deprived of his horse and arms, in conformity with the usage of the Franks and other warlike people of that period, in the present case he was also deprived of his liberty, and retained a prisoner at the mercy of his foe. Manacled hand and

foot, his neck and waist also encircled by an iron chain, he was dragged at the tail of a horse up the Wolkenburg Mountain, and there was cast into the deepest and darkest dungeon of the castle. His followers were irremediably dispersed. His power was irrecoverably lost. He had no longer consolation but in the hope of death.

Another year had now elapsed: in the interim, Walter had headed an expedition to a distant part of the country; and Helgunda was left sole mistress of his castle, and sole regent of his lands in his absence.

“Alas! and wo is me!” she spake to her favourite damsel, one morning as they sat together in her chamber; “My husband returns not. God help me! I am now neither maid, nor wife, nor widow.”

The cunning confidant, who knew her mistress’s propensities but too well, at once made answer and said:—

“The young prince, your first love, now pines in the lowest dungeon of the castle—a pitiful place that for a pretty fellow to abide in, while a fair lady is in want of a fond lover! Why should my lady languish?”

Helgunda heard this remark without a word of observation; but it was not the more unheeded by her; on the contrary, it sunk deep into her depraved soul. The next morning saw the prince free, sitting by her side at the matin meal, lord of her love once more, and master of the Castle of Wolkenburg and its contiguous territory. The late autumn, the dreary winter, and the cheering spring-time, were spent in a round of dissipation by the guilty pair. On the coming of summer-tide, Helgunda received intelligence of the approach of her husband. She made her arrangements accordingly.

The unsuspecting Walter arrived at Wolkenburg in due time; and Helgunda surpassed herself in the simulated fondness with which she received him. He was overcome with joy; and in the excess of his feelings, he blessed God for giving him such a fond and faithful wife. The prince had been returned to his dungeon to prevent discovery; nothing of the change which had passed was apparent in the castle. Walter awoke the next

morning a fettered prisoner, in the place of his faithless wife's minion. That treacherous woman had drugged his drink ; and in the dead of the night, while he slept, she and her lover had loaded his limbs with chains, and borne him thither. The castle was filled with their retainers ; the hapless husband had therefore no remedy but submission ; sorrow and rage were equally idle, and alike unavailing. But their malice did not stop short here : to aggravate the tortures of their victim, they caused a massive collar of iron to be fastened in the walls of the banqueting room ; to that Walter, the captive, was shortly fastened. A soft couch was then placed opposite it, so that the wretched husband might witness them at all times, either at their luxurious meals, or in the amorous dalliance which succeeded. He, the while, was fed only upon the refuse of the kennels, black bread, half-gnawed bones, and fetid water. Thus passed over the sunny summer.

In the meantime, a sister of the prince had come to the Castle of Wolkenburg by special invitation from her brother. She witnessed the punishment of Walter, and her gentle heart pitied him. Anon, that feeling changed into love ; and she now only thought to save him. Unmindful of aught—of her brother's safety or even of her own, she assisted him in the dead hour of the night to file away his fetters ; and when, at length, they might be broken by a touch, she brought him his tried and trusty sword. All she prayed of him or requested for this service was a kind look—a tender word—a single smile. It may be that she would have had him love her, too, as much as she loved him, but she said no word about it ; and he was too much occupied with the work of his emancipation to think of any thing else at the moment. That night he slept soundly ;—he was free. With the morning dawn, however, he resumed once more his chains, and stood again in the degraded position he had so long occupied. The hour of vengeance rapidly approached.

At noon, the prince and Helgunda dined as usual in the great hall of the castle, which served at once as a banqueting room to them, and a prison to its rightful lord ; and also, as was their daily wont, they held free amorous converse in his presence. As they dallied together, thus outspake their prisoner threateningly :—

“Ha! ha! wretches! how were it with ye an I was free from these bonds?”

Helgunda started, in affright, from the couch on which she reclined, as she heard these wild words, and crouched timidly behind her lover, as for protection. The prince, however, bade her fear naught,—laughed at her terrors,—and thus replied to Walter in a sneering sort:—

“Nay, nay, an ye were, we should even do as we might. But first be free, and then we’ll talk on’t.”

Turning to his mistress, he once more caressed her; and they gave themselves up once more to the tumult of guilty delight.

“Ha! ha! wretches!” again outspake Walter, in a fiercer tone; “how were it with ye, an I stood beside ye at this moment with a sheathless glaive in my hand?”

Again Helgunda started from the couch, and hid herself from the glare of her husband’s eye, while she thus addressed her lover:—

“Pardon me, my prince, but my heart misgives me—I may not think of aught but danger. This morning I missed his sword from the place where it hung since his captivity;—let us leave him here alone.”

“Nay! never talk of danger to me!” answered the prince, angrily. “I tell thee, an he had twenty swords, and every one of them twenty times the edge and power of Balmung, the sword of Siegfried,* they would avail him naught. How could he cut the heavy iron collar which fastens him to yonder wall?—how might he sever the gyves and manacles which fetter him to that massive masonry? Let us, then, be merry—let us mock his impotent rage, and laugh at his idle threats.”

So saying, he wound his arms round the graceful form of the faithless wife, and again they renewed their endearments. At the moment, however, when their pleasure was at its height,—when they had eyes and ears for nothing, and were all in all to each other,—Walter slipped off his chains, disencumbered himself of his fetters, and stole softly to the side of the couch whereon they were laid. His bright blade glistened in the air; death was in his grisly aspect; his eye shot forth the fire of rage and revenge.

* Siegfried, the Dragon-Killer.

“Heaven!” shrieked Helgunda, who was the first to catch a glimpse of him; “Help! help!”

“Die, traitors! die!” was all the injured husband spoke, as he whirled his blade on high.

The trenchant weapon flashed aloft; it paused over the guilty pair a single moment; in the next it fell with a dead dull crash, and they were severed in twain. It cut shear through back-bone and bowels of both; they never spoke nor stirred after.

Thus was the injured Walter avenged on his faithless wife. Such ever be the fate of wedded treachery.

THE OEHLBERG.

The Oehlberg, which succeeds on the panoramic view that accompanies these pages, is invested, equally as its predecessors, with the mystic halo of legendary lore. The following tender tale is told of the dwellers in the castle which once stood on its summit. It is better known to the general reader than the greater part of those which have been already related; but still it will be found not less interesting, nor less capable of exciting renewed sympathy.

GOD'S LOVE.*

In the middle of the twelfth century, when the papal rule was supreme in Europe, and the haughtiest princes bowed their heads to the proud lords of the church, an old baron, Balther von Bassenich, dwelt in the noble castle which then stood on the highest point of the Oehlberg. He had no child but one, a daughter, named Liba, who was “passing” fair, as well as gentle and very virtuous. Her beauty and her goodness, conjoined with her father's possessions, attracted to her feet many suitors from far and near; but the favoured of the throng was a young knight of the neighbourhood, named Schott von Grunstein.

* “ ‘ Whom the god's love die young,’ was said of yore,
 And many deaths do they escape by this;
 The death of friends, and that which slays even more—
 The death of friendship, love, youth, all that is,
 Except mere breath; and since the silent shore
 Awaits, at last, even those who longest miss
 The old archer's shafts, perhaps the early grave
 Which men weep over, may be meant to save.”—*Don Juan*, c. iv.

They "loved and were beloved;" and the aged sire of the maiden had given his assent to their union.

" And they were happy ; for to their young eyes
Each was an angel, and earth paradise."

The days which were to intervene between their bridal were to them like a long, long dream of delight. Alas! they could not foresee the storm which was about to burst upon them, and bury their fond hopes in darkness and desolation. How should they? There was not a dark spot in their bright, serene, beautiful heaven. Perhaps it was all the better for being so.

The aged father of Liba had long entertained a deep and implacable hatred against Engelbert the holy, the pious, but severe prince-bishop and elector of Cologne, to whom he stood in the relation of feudatory, or, more properly speaking, of knight-vassal. The quarrel arose from a very trifling circumstance at first; but it soon increased, as such quarrels generally do, to a pitch altogether unwarranted on either side. Unfortunately, it only strengthened with years, and the growing infirmity of the parties, instead of decreasing in virulence and intensity.

" Alas! they had been friends in youth,
But whispering tongues will poison truth;
And constancy lives in realms above,
And youth is stormy, and life is vain,
And to be wrath with one we love,
Doth act like madness on the brain."*

So it was with the prince-bishop and his noble vassal. They had been fast friends in youth; they were now bitter foes in their old age. Neither sought to conceal his enmity from the other, or from the world. The results were fatal to both.

One day, as Balther sat at table in the great hall of his castle, surrounded by a crowd of guests,—knights and barons of the neighbourhood,—the conversation turned upon some recent act of the bishop, their sovereign, which these free-livers, or, in strict truth-speaking, these free-booters, complained of as arbitrary and oppressive. The punishment of one of their "order," for setting on and plundering a caravan or company of merchants

* Coleridge's "Christabel."

travelling through the territory of Cologne towards the Rhine, on their way to the far-famed October fair at Frankfort, was that which they discussed, and at which they were all very wroth to a man. Every one at table was excited at it, for each was likely to be placed in a similar predicament, and to merit, perhaps, similar treatment, at the hands of the rigid prelate. As the feast proceeded, and the wine-cup circulated more freely among them, their complaints waxed louder, and their expressions of anger and discontent became bitterer and bolder. Threats were uttered against their feudal sovereign; and "curses deep and loud" were muttered by mouths that dared not to have spoken them in a state of sobriety. Balther saw the turmoil with delight; and he sought to exalt their anger still more by his own observations.

"Alas!" said he; "it is ill for me that the days of my youth are gone! Wo is the man who may not do his own battle! Would that I could but wield a sword as I was wont to wield it in days of yore! I should not long tolerate this clerical insolence! He treats us as if we were not his equals! Is there one among us whose birth is less noble than his?"

His auditors cheered this inflammatory and self-flattering speech. The applause was boisterous, loud, and long-continued. It is usually so on such occasions, and under such circumstances.

"—But never mind," he continued, "we must only live on, like so many whipped hounds, to lick the hand that smites us."

"Never! never!" shouted the excited assembly, as with a single voice.

"Never?" echoed their host, incredulously; "Alas! alas! we speak only—we do nothing more."

"What shall we do?" up and spake a fierce, black-browed, thick-bearded baron, who dwelt on the shores of the Rhine. The salutary severity of the bishop was particularly obnoxious to him, for it had more than once prevented his plundering all passengers on the river.

"What shall we do?" echoed the maddened revellers.

"Pledge me in a beaker," quoth Balther dryly.

They rose as one man. Their deep cups foamed over the brim with the generous juice of the Rhenish grape. Deadly hatred was imprinted on every countenance. Each right hand

was held aloft, each left hand grasped its sword-hilt with a short convulsive motion. Balthar stood at the head of the table, towering over all.

"Here's to the speedy downfall of our enemies!" spake he. "If you have the hearts of men in your bodies, you'll understand my meaning. Death to our arch foe!"

"Death to our arch foe!" shouted the drinkers; and they drained off their beakers to the dregs.

In that hour the fate of the archbishop was decided.

A conspiracy was then and there formed, plans were laid, and every precaution taken to ensure the destruction of the obnoxious prelate. Within a brief space they had accomplished their diabolical object, in what manner it boots not the present purpose to relate; and the more especially so, as it has been already partially related in these pages.*

The horror excited in Germany by this foul deed was fully equal to that excited by the murder of Thomas à Becket, about the same period, in England. The whole nation were up in arms against the perpetrators. The common people, with whom the bishop, in his clerical character, was a great favourite, demanded justice with loud outcries and wild threats; the free cities of the empire denounced the assassins, because of the enormity of the act, and the protection which that prelate had always afforded to traffic in his territories; and the electors of the Germanic body insisted on the persecution to the death of all connected with the murder, as an example to the robber-knights, and as a safeguard against any similar attempts on their own persons. The emperor could not withstand the united voice of the empire, the solicitations of his friends, and the prayers of his best supporters, even if he had entertained an intention to do so. But he never did; and he acted accordingly. Without a moment's delay he issued the strictest orders to seize and execute all the conspirators; to level their castles with the earth; and to dispossess their heirs and descendants for ever. The terrible punishment of fire and sword to the *outrance* was pronounced on all concerned, mediate or immediately, in the murder of the prince-bishop: such was the fearful sentence that went forth against them.

* Vide "Westhofen—The River Fight," p. 107, &c.

Balthar had never concealed his hatred of the deceased prelate; and he had, moreover, taken little pains to keep secret his participation in the plot by which he had been deprived of life. The first burst of the national vengeance was, therefore, naturally directed on him. Before he was even aware of his danger, his castle was surrounded by a large body of troops, detached for the purpose by forced marches across the most unfrequented parts of the country, and all within it completely enclosed, as in a net, by a determined host of assailants.

It was a dark, dreary, wild, winter night, and all in the castle had for some time retired to rest, when the alarm of foes at hand was shouted from the ill-watched turrets by the half-awakened wardens. Long ere any thing like effectual opposition could be organized against them, the imperial forces were in the courtyard, and on the walls. A brief space more, and they filled all the lower apartments, and were almost in complete possession of the keep. In this moment of doubt, and dread, and danger, and dismay, Liba, scantily clothed, rushed into her father's chamber, and apprised him of his situation. Aroused from a deep sleep by her fearful cry, he sprung up and hastily grasped his arms. The castle was in flames; the fire raged in every visible part of the pile.

"Fly, father! fly!" shrieked the maiden.

Balthar gazed around him for a single moment, as though labouring under the influence of a fearful dream; the next instant he unsheathed his sword, and made for the door of the apartment.

"Where are the incendiaries?" he shouted. "Where are the villains, the robbers, the cowardly assassins?"

Liba flung herself in his arms. Another glance shewed him that all hope of resistance was useless—that all hope of escape was vain. The flames rolled heavily up the staircase; he and his child were almost suffocated with the thick black smoke. In a few seconds the massive oak door was in one fierce blaze. Balthar flung down his sword in despair; but Liba shewed a woman's coolness and a woman's heroism in this trying moment.

"Come," she cried, dragging the unresisting old man towards the further end of the apartment. She touched a concealed spring in the wainscot, which disclosed, through a movable

panel, a secret entrance to the vaults of the castle. "Come, my dear father," she continued, "the subterranean passage is still open. Let us fly in that direction, it leads to the woods."

They entered the aperture, and, plunging into the passage, were soon lost in darkness. A moment more, and the room they had left was one mass of fire, and smoke, and crackling flame. The devouring element followed them so fast, that the hair and eyebrows of the old knight were severely scorched, which rendered it difficult for him to see his way; but he was under the guidance of a guardian angel, his gentle daughter, who led his tottering steps onward, until they found, at length, a place of rest and safety. The way they tracked was long, and damp, and dim, and dreary; they emerged, however, to the earth again, in a deep cavity of the mountain. There the subterranean passage terminated. Weary, weak, exhausted with fatigue, and sick at heart with grief and sorrow, the hapless fugitives sank to the earth in a state of insensibility, on breathing once again the free air of heaven. A deep sleep fell upon them in that state of unconsciousness, in which they continued so long, that when again their eyes opened to the light, the sun was high in the sky, and the lark and the wood-thrush, and all the little birds o' the bush, were merrily welcoming his meridian.

Liba—the good, the gentle, the beautiful, and the fond—at once bestirred her to provide food for her fainting father. She plucked him wild berries from the thick underwood which overhung, on all sides, the chasm in which they were concealed, and she dug up, with her own fair fingers, those roots which she knew were nutritive to life. Balther was in a most miserable plight; his eyes had become so swollen and painful, that he could no longer see any thing distinctly; the fever of his blood produced an intense thirst in his parched throat, and he languished for a drop of water to appease it, as much as ever did Dives in the parable, or a hunted hart in the burning desert. But he languished not long; for that, too, was soon supplied by the affectionate care of his devoted daughter. In this place they tarried until twilight; and then, with a heavy heart, they bent their course towards the remoter recesses of the Seven Mountains. As they pursued their toilsome path in darkness and in silence, they came all at once on a narrow dell, in the centre of which

stood the ruins of a small chapel, with a little hermitage attached to it.

"Here," said Liba, "we will take up our abode. Providence points it out to us!"

"But what shall become of us here?" sighed her aged sire, despairingly.

"What God wills," replied the noble-hearted girl, with an unabated confidence in Him who protects the meanest of his creatures, so that a solitary sparrow shall not fall to the ground without His will; and, so saying, she kissed her father's forehead.

"Be it so, my darling child," was all the old man said in answer. "You are now, alas! the only light of my eyes—my only staff—my only hope."

In this wretched dwelling they abode for some time. In the meanwhile, Balther became stone-blind; but he bore that worst of all earthly bereavements with an exemplary patience, and a resignation to the will of God, which was most edifying and beautiful to witness.

"I am a grievous sinner," he would say to himself; "and I am justly punished. But I thank God for his great and surpassing mercy, that he has given me time to repent."

Thus they lived together in that wild and solitary dell.

In the lapse of time, however, the immediate vicinity of their hovel was quite exhausted of its scanty stock of food; the bushes were all stripped of their berries, and even of the green tops of their leaves; the earth no longer afforded them any edible roots. Liba had, therefore, to extend her search in quest of their wretched sustenance to a still greater distance. In one of these peregrinations she suddenly caught a glance of a man seated under a tree, not a hundred yards from the spot she stood on. His head rested on his hand in a musing, or, it may be, in a melancholy attitude; a hunting spear, and a *couteau de chasse*, lay on the grass beside him; and a couple of stalwart, white, wire-haired hounds crouched silently at his feet. What to do in this emergency the maiden knew not. Fear, and an involuntary feeling, somewhat akin to curiosity, somewhat akin to hope, chained her, as it were, to the earth: she could not stir, for the life of her, even if she so willed it; but she did not. A minute more, and the dogs began to bark and bay: the hunter sprang

on his feet, and turned quickly round—it was Schott von Grunstein—her lover, her betrothed, her all but husband.

She stretched forth her arms towards him without knowing what she did, and, in an agony of spirit, she essayed to call his name; but the thick underwood completely hid her from his view; and her voice failed her, in the extremity of her agitation. The youth flung himself on the earth once more, and chided his dogs for the false alarm they had raised. Liba had now time to think of what course she should pursue in this unexpected conjuncture.

“Shall I,” she soliloquized, “shall I make him acquainted with our wretched condition? If I do so, he will certainly insist on relieving it; and thus will he be made a participator in my father’s guilt, and a sharer of my father’s punishment. If I do, he will compel us to accompany him to his castle; and the vengeance of the emperor will fall on him for sheltering my poor sire; then I shall have to mourn for two in place of one—to weep his fate as well as my father’s. No; I must and shall repent with my sire alone, and pray for him in solitude, to the end that the judgment of the all-righteous God may be averted from his aged head, and Heaven be moved to look on him with pity.”

Her soul was now at peace with itself. The spell which had bound her to the spot was broken by this high-minded resolve; and she stole away softly once more to the side of her wretched father’s sorry couch in the deep wilderness. He was calmer than usual. She sat over him, and spoke of hope and of happiness hereafter, just as an angel of light might be imagined to do. He grasped her soft white hand, and pressed it fondly to his failing heart.

“I know not,” he said, “why it is, but my spirits are lighter now than they have been for many a long, long day. Methinks, too, my eyesight has returned to me. Surely that is the sky I see above me; is it not beautiful and clear, my own Liba?”

“It is clear and beautiful, my father,” replied the rejoiced maiden; “there is only one black cloud in the blue heavens, and that is passing fast away from view.”

“Lead me forth into the sunshine,” pursued Balthar, after

a short pause. "I would fain feel once more the warmth of his beams—I would die in his light, if it be permitted me."

"Alas! alas!" rejoined Liba; there is no sun in this dell. The height of the precipice above us, and the depth of the valley in which we are placed, precludes it from ever penetrating here. But I will lead you to the top of yon rock by an easy path, and there you can enjoy your desire, my father."

She assisted his tottering steps to the summit of the rock: the ascent was long and painful. There, seating him on a moss-covered fragment of rock, over which an old oak tree spread its gnarled branches, she took up her position at his feet, looking anxiously into his sightless eyes.

"Liba," said he on a sudden; "Liba, my love! I see the sky—I see the sun!"

"You see again, my father?" exclaimed the delighted girl. "Thank God! thank God!"

"Not with these eyes, my child," he replied, shaking his head sorrowfully; "not with these eyes, they are rayless; sight is extinct in them for ever. But I see with those within me a heaven and a sun, and a sky without cloud, and a glory beyond the sun of this world."

Liba fell on her knees in silence, and, folding her hands to heaven, prayed fervently.

"Oh, righteous Judge," she spake, in the depths of her spirit; "give us, I beseech thee, a token of thy forgiveness and mercy."

Balther folded his hands and prayed in silence also. It was a touching sight, to see guilt and innocence pleading together to the throne of mercy and of grace.

"Amen," said the old man meekly, as though his daughter's pious but silent supplication fell on his awakened ear.

All on a sudden the face of the sky was darkened, the thunder rolled heavily over their heads, and a flash of forked lightning smote the supplicants. Father and daughter were in a moment struck dead. The body of the former was consumed to ashes; that of the latter, the fair and fond Liba, lay near the smouldering and blackened heap, untouched and unmarked by the finger of death. Her pale face seemed as calm and peaceful as that of sleeping infancy—her long lashes closed, as if only in slumber.

Schott von Grunstein happened to be hunting in the wood at that very moment. He heard the thunder, and saw the flash which followed it; and he felt both fear and surprise at the sudden crash. Curious to trace its effects, he penetrated to the place where it fell; there lay his Liba, beside the ashes of her departed sire. In mercy to ourselves, we draw a veil over his sufferings. On that spot he built a small chapel or oratory, where he thenceforward took up his abode, dedicating himself to the service of the mother of God. Since then, that rock has been named the Treuenfels, or Cliff of Truth.

In a wild, lonely dell, deep in the bosom of the Oehlberg, so thickly overgrown with shrubs and underwood as to be scarcely visible, are still seen the remains of an old wall, the work of former ages. Central in that relic of the past is a gravestone, on which alone the letters "LIBA" are distinctly traceable. The remaining words of the inscription are quite obliterated by time, and the influence of revolving seasons. That stone is the only memento of the once lovely Liba—that fragment of wall is all that is left of the oratory built by her lover.

"Whom the gods love, die young."

'Tis a singular tale: but there are those who even yet believe it; and still sorrow for the fond youth and gentle maiden.

THE HEMMERICH.

The Hemmerich, though now a solitude, was once the seat of a noble race, who abode there in love and in joy for many generations. The last scion of this ancient stock, who occupied as a residence the *fortalice* which then stood upon its highest peak, was that Lord of Heinsberg who perished in a fray with the Archbishop of Cologne, near Lechenich, on the other side of the river.

This is the legend of the mountain.

THE DEVOTED.

In that stronghold castle, when the world was younger than it is now, Siegbert, an old noble of the ancient Alemanni, held his abode. It was about the time that Attila, "the scourge of God," with his wild Huns, swept over the Roman empire like a

destructive torrent, devastating and destroying every thing in its fearful course. The valley of the Rhine, of course, could not escape them ; for where was a fairer spot to be found in the wide-spread territories of Rome ? They poured their thousands and their tens of thousands through it on their way to the invasion of Gaul ;* and they left, in every part of it, traces of their violence and their ferocious barbarity. Siegbert was faithful to the Roman rule, and he consequently suffered more at the hands of these merciless barbarians than many others of his neighbours. His castle was dismantled ; his retainers and domestics were slain or dispersed ; and he himself was only saved by the presence of mind and fidelity of an old servant. While the Huns remained in the Rhine-land, he, together with his only child, the fair Friedhilda, and this aged menial, took up his abode in a cavern of the cliffs in the most rugged and inaccessible part of the adjacent mountains. There they continued for a considerable period, undisturbed of their enemies, kept alive by the hope of again regaining their lost possessions : their precarious subsistence being derived from the chase of wild animals, and the scanty crop of wild berries which the woods afforded. Friedhilda, in the meanwhile, grew daily in beauty and in goodness : but the aged Siegbert, notwithstanding her filial cares, drooped and pined away visibly to all. He sorrowed much for the change that had taken place in their fortunes, and he would not be comforted for the great deprivations endured by his dear child. Thus stood things for some time.

Early one morn in midsummer, Friedhilda descended from the cavern where they abode, to the little valley which lay at the foot of the mountain chasm in which it was situated, to collect berries and roots for their matin meal, and to seek some herb of grace for the appeasement of her beloved father's malady. A little rivulet ran through the dell, and murmured musically in the pure atmosphere of the morning. She sat down on the green bank to listen awhile to its melody, and to muse a moment on the past. On a sudden, however, she was startled from her reverie by the sound of approaching footsteps. Dreading equally the sight of a human being or of wild beasts, she rose to take

* A.D. 451.

flight up the hill-side ; but her progress was at once arrested by the appearance of a young man of noble mien and courteous bearing, who besought her in mild tones, and with a glance which found its way immediately to her heart, to stay, and fear him not, for that he would not harm her. Almost unconsciously she did as he desired ; and a degree of confidence soon sprung up in her bosom for him. In a moment more she feared him no longer.

“ I have lost my way in these mountains,” said the youth ; “ and I know not how or where to find my companions of the chase, from whom I parted by accident in the forests at their foot overnight. Lovely maiden, can you direct me on my path ? ”

Friedhilda blushed, and cast down her eyes modestly.

“ I am myself but a stranger to the mountain ways,” replied she, pausing, as if in doubt, “ and I know but little of their intricacies.”

“ Well, then,” resumed the youth, “ I must even track my course as best I can ; ” and he prepared to depart.

“ — But,” continued the maiden, as she furtively glanced upwards at his manly form and clear open countenance ; “ but, if you come with me to my dear father’s dwelling, you will be welcomed as his guest, and our old servant will assuredly set you again in the right road.”

The youth thanked her in a manner which spoke more than words could express.

“ No,” murmured she to herself, “ no, he is no traitor ; he will not betray my dear, dear father. No ; I feel that he will not.”

The youth took her arm ; assisted by him, she sprang up the mountain-side like a young fawn. The cavern was soon reached. Her fair face, suffused with the glow of healthful exercise, her eyes sparkling with pleasurable excitement, her heart throbbing with nameless sensations unfelt and unknown ’till then, she stood before her fond father, and introduced to his notice the young stranger, her companion. Siegbert received him with all the hospitable heartiness of ancient days and old-world customs, and offered him the best of those refreshments which his straitened circumstances afforded. Berries and water, for the grape then grew not on the banks of the Rhine, were all

he could give ; but even these were most acceptable to the youth, who had tasted no food since the preceding evening ; and they were made sweet and sufficient by the solicitations of the gentle Friedhilda. When the frugal meal was finished, then, and not until then, did the old host inquire the name and condition of his guest, and ask after his place of residence as well as about his people.

“ My name is Griso,” frankly answered the youth, to the plain and undisguised interrogatories of Siegbert ; “ I live in the Upper Rhine district. My father was an Alemann noble. He was slain not long since in a foray against the neighbouring Franks. My mother died shortly after, of grief for his loss. It is about a year, now, that I have known no settled home. Since their death, the solitude of my castle has become insupportable, and I dwell chiefly in the woods, following the chase for my amusement. When a house has no woman at the head of it, it is worse than a desert or a dungeon.”

Siegbert smiled and nodded approval, while his fond glances fell on the fair girl, who sat at his feet in a beautiful attitude of filial affection. After much conversation on various subjects, in all of which the young Griso exhibited the ingenuousness of his years, and the goodness of his natural disposition, Siegbert himself conducted him to an outlet from the rocky dell, and there they parted. That brief hour had made them as fast friends as though the acquaintance were of years’ standing. Griso was captivated with the charms of Friedhilda ; and the fair maiden felt within herself that her heart was not wholly insensible to the merits of the youthful stranger. Days fled, but still they effaced not his image from her recollection. Moons waxed and waned, but the impression seemed only to become deeper. The old song says

“ Absence makes the heart grow fonder.”

It was so in truth with the fair Friedhilda. Alas, for her, she soon found out that she loved ; alas, for her aged father, he soon found it out too !

“ Daughter—my daughter,” said Siegbert to her one sultry summer eve, as they sat within the cool, dark shade of the cavern ; she combing out her beautiful long yellow locks and

sighing, as though her gentle bosom would burst, he musing and silent. "Daughter—my daughter, I fear you have set your heart upon yon stranger youth."

She started, and coloured up to the forehead; her swanlike neck at once grew suffused with the purple current of life, and her eyes glanced around timidly and in fear. She then cast them on the ground, as though she were detected in the act of committing some heinous crime.

"Blush not, my child, nor be ashamed of it an you be," kindly continued the old man, who now saw clearly how the case stood; "he is a brave and a good youth, and seems, to my thought, to be every way worthy of you."

Friedhilda blushed even more deeply than before, but still she said nothing. It was manifest, however, that her confusion had considerably decreased.

"Besides," pursued her sire, "I am sure he loves you."

"Father, father!" was all she could exclaim. Her utterance became choked with emotion, on hearing him speak these welcome words.

"Father, father! do you say he loves me?" repeated she, recovering at once, and flinging herself into the good old man's extended arms. She clasped his aged neck with her lily-white hands; she hugged him to her heart: it was beautiful to behold.

"I do, my child," replied he. "And I say, moreover, that you shall be his bride, if you wish it."

"Father, father!" was all she could say, for another access of emotion stifled her words. She buried her fair face in her father's bosom, and there she wept like a little child for very joy. That day, indeed, she was happiest of the happy.

In a short time after this occurrence, Griso paid them a visit. He lighted on the maiden in the same spot where he had first beheld her. This may seem a surprising coincidence; but it will be explained when it is stated that she spent the greatest part of her leisure time there, thinking over their first meeting, and imagining to herself his step in the rustle of the leaves, his voice in the murmurs of the little rivulet, or his sigh in the soft whisper of the breeze. Need it be said, that she was as much pleased as surprised at the meeting?

"Lovely maiden," spake the youth, sitting at her feet, and

holding her fair hand fondly clasped in his ; “ since first I saw you I have known no peace of mind—no happiness. My own home has been a place of banishment, a desert to me, more solitary than ever. The chase has no longer any charms for me,—the sports of my youth, once loved so well, now delight me no longer. Permit that I pray your father to give me your hand. Wilt thou be my bride ?”

Friedhilda knew not what answer to make to this abrupt declaration ; and so, like most maidens similarly circumstanced, she blushed “ rosy red,” cast down her eyes, and said—nothing. The heaving of her beautiful bosom shewed, however, that she was not insensible of what passed, unmoved by her lover’s presence, nor untouched by his passion.

“ May I ask your sire ?” repeated the enraptured youth. “ Gentle maiden, speak.”

She raised her long, dark-fringed eye-lashes for a single moment, and moved her lips murmuringly.

“ Yes !” echoed her delighted Griso, whose faculties were quickened by love, or in whose mind, mayhap, “ the wish was parent to the thought ;” “ I may—you permit me ! Thanks—thanks—‘ a thousand times thanks !’”

He covered her passive hand with fervent kisses ; he overwhelmed her with protestations of love, and happiness, and joy.

Arm-in-arm they proceeded together to the cavern ; there Griso told his hopes to her sire, and prayed his consent to their immediate union.

“ If it be my daughter’s desire,” said the old man, “ I have no earthly objection to offer ; and may Heaven prosper you both.”

The lovers knelt to the aged man, and he blessed them with a father’s blessing. Griso then drew a massive gold chain from his bosom, and proceeded to place it on Friedhilda’s swanlike neck, in token of their betrothment.

“ This chain,” said he, and he sighed deeply as he spake ; “ this chain once encircled the neck of my own sweet sister. She sent it to me as a keepsake, in the last moment of her life, when she was conducted to the sacred grove of Hertha,* there

* Hertha, the Earth, worshipped by the Saxons, occasionally with human sacrifices.

to be offered up a sacrifice to the goddess Hertha, in the still, deep, deadly forest-shade."

Friedhilda shrunk back, with horror and affright depicted on her beautiful countenance. Her heart sunk within her, as she heard these ominous words. Siegbert, her sire, shuddered and changed colour; his mind misgave him—he seemed to foresee but misery for his child. Griso looked aghast; he knew not what those appearances boded, nor how this scene would end.

"But you are now a Christian?" asked the old man, after a long pause. His voice trembled as he spoke.

Friedhilda's soul shook within her as she awaited the reply. It was a sublime scene to see.

"No," answered the youth proudly; "I am not."

Like to a crushed lily leaning on its stem, Friedhilda sank for support on the bosom of her sire, and there lay for some moments—pale, thoughtful, and all unconscious of every thing passing around. In the meanwhile it was evident that Siegbert had taken his resolution, and that he meant to abide by it.

"We are followers of the cross," said the old man solemnly, after a brief but painful silence; "in Christ alone is our faith; through Him only we hope for heaven. Never shall daughter of mine marry a heathen. Unless you embrace our holy religion, and be baptized in the Christian creed, she sees you no more—all is at an end. Decide!"

"I love the maiden more than I love my own life," replied Griso, his faith struggling fearfully with his affection; "but I cannot consent to draw down on my offspring the rage of the gods."

"There is but one God," interposed Siegbert; "there is but one God, and He is neither Woden nor Thor."

Griso shook his head incredulously, but answered not. His soul was very sorrowful.

"Go, youth," continued the old man, whose heart was now filled with pity for him, and for his devoted daughter; "go, and bethink thee of my proposal. Put up thy prayers to heaven, and to the true God, for enlightenment and strength in this season of doubt and difficulty. He will not fail you in your need. Then come again to me."

Griso departed a sadder, "but not a wiser man." A prey

to the deepest emotions, his heart was torn in different directions ; by the passion of love in the one way, and by the prejudice of early education in the other. His path homewards lay through the thick forest—the Oden-wald, and as he wended his way beneath those aged oaks consecrated to the worship of the god from whom it takes its name, and bethought him of his departed sires, he resolved within himself that where they were, in the world to come, even there would he be also, and nowhere else. His journey was at an end the next morning. As he entered the court of his castle, his eye fell on a large cross which lay in the entrance and blocked up the road. At that period of the year, in accordance with immemorial custom, it was usually dragged along the ground, and subjected to every species of desecration, as an insult and degradation to that faith of which it is the received symbol.

“It is the emblem of my gentle Friedhilda’s belief,” said Griso to himself; “for her sake I shall not see it cast down and trampled on.”

He approached to raise it from the spot in which it lay, with the intention of placing it out of the reach of further insult; but the disembodied spirit of his father appeared to flit before his eyes even as he did so; and a warning voice from Hertha’s mystic grove seemed borne to his ears by the breeze of the evening, to forbid the pious act.

If he had vacillated before between the faith of his father and that of his beloved Friedhilda, he now vacillated no longer. Filled with holy horror, he fled to the recesses of his lonely chamber; and there, in silence and in solitude, he vowed a vow, that in life or in death he would know no gods save those which had been worshipped by his predecessors.

But how was it all the while with Friedhilda? How fared she in the time that followed?

When her lover left her, she felt that life was from thenceforward to her as nothing. Like a fair flower with a worm at its root, she drooped, and pined, and faded away, day after day, hour after hour, minute after minute. A deep devotion to God, a high sense of filial duty, and a noble consciousness of what was due to her own honour and dignity, caused her to acquiesce in a separation, which every moment made but more and more

apparent to her as final in this world, if not in the world to come; yet still she could not altogether cast away from her heart the consuming passion which withered her hopes, her joys, her feelings, yea, her very sensations, and which wasted away her bloom and her beauty, even as that of a delicate blossom nipped by the returning blight of unexpected winter. She had grown old before she was young; she knew many sorrows, and was acquainted with grief. Every thing seemed changed for the worse with her—all went wrong.

“Misfortunes never come single.” Siegbert died shortly after this occurrence; and the old faithful domestic did not survive him many days. She was now alone in the world. But what was solitude to her? She had no fears—no hope—naught to live for nor to love.

After performing, as well as she could, the last sad offices for the dead, she abandoned for ever the cavern they had so long dwelt in; and, penetrating deeper into the recesses of the forest which then covered the side of the mountains, as well as the interjacent valleys, she there sought out a still more solitary residence. There with her own hands she raised a rude, wretched hut, and beside it she piled up an altar of loose stones, on the top of which she erected the holy cross. In this solitude, serving God in faith and all humility, she abode in peace for many years. The beasts of the forest harmed her not; it seemed as though they were awed by her presence, or by the protection which some unseen power extended over her: the birds of the air built their nests without fear in the thick foliage of the old oaks which shadowed her dreary dwelling—why should they fear her?—and the wild deer would bound exultingly before her as though she were one of their own species, and then playfully lay them down at her feet, or couch quietly by the foot of the altar, when she prayed there at morn, and noon, and evening.

Thus passed her time: she, the while, patiently awaiting the moment when her sufferings would have an end; and when her chastened spirit should be reunited to its God. At length she fell ill. She felt at once that her sickness was mortal. It was at the close of a bright and beautiful summer day, when the slanting sun shed his effulgent light through the intertwisted branches

of the forest trees, touching every leaf with a tender, transparent hue, and flinging the shadow of the thick trunks in bold, black lines, on the green sward before her lowly cell, that she crept forth from the gloom which ever dwelt within that dim abode, and crawled slowly and painfully towards the long-venerated cross which she had herself erected.

"Here," murmured she, "shall I die; oh, God, receive my spirit!"

She extended herself at the foot of the rude altar, and stretched forth her wasted hands in the attitude of prayer. Death came upon her even like a deep sleep as she did so; she expired without a struggle or a sigh. Friedhilda,—the once beautiful Friedhilda,—the lovely, the beloved, the good, and the virtuous, was now an inanimate lump of mortality—a mass of "dust and ashes."

Before life was extinct, however, an aged priest, as though despatched thither by Providence, approached her last resting-place. She smiled, and bade him to her. He was the chaplain of her sire when her sire had a home; he, too, had been a refugee since the destruction of the castle.

"Father," faintly murmured the dying saint, for a saint she was, if ever saint existed on this earth; "Father, Heaven has heard my last prayer, and sent you to my aid in this trying moment. Shrive me and sain me, that I may depart in peace with the Lord."

The aged priest obeyed her injunctions.

"Now, father," she faltered forth, "one more request, and I go to join the blessed—to join my beloved sire, and my long-lost, gentle mother."

The old priest listened intently, promising to perform her wish, whatever it might be.

She placed a small scroll of parchment in his hands, and proceeded.

"Bury me beneath this altar, on the spot where I now lie; and let what is written on that scroll be engraved on my humble tombstone—my only epitaph. Farewell, father; I die."

The face of a sleeping babe could not present a more peaceful appearance than did that of her corpse: it was "beautiful exceedingly."

The old priest was not unmindful of his promise. The next morning he gathered together the few simple herds who dwelt at the foot of the mountain, and proceeded forthwith to its fulfilment. As they pursued their pious task, the wild beasts of the wood flocked around, but shewed no disposition to injure or to harm them. Her favourite fawns, too, were there with hanging heads, and with big tears in their soft, full eyes. While the body of the hapless maiden was being laid in the deep grave, audible sounds, expressive of sorrow and deep grief, were heard from that extraordinary concourse of mourners. Her dirge seemed to be sung by the ravens who dwelt in the thick trees of the forest: the fierce beasts groaned her elegy. When the grave was filled, and the sad ceremony had concluded, they departed slowly, and, to all appearance, full of sadness. A tombstone was placed on the grave as she had requested; and the following legend, copied from the scroll which she had given the old priest in her last moments, deeply engraven on it:—

“ PERE RESTS FRIEDPILDT, WHO SACRIFICED PER LOVE TO PER FAITH, TO SAVE PER IMMORTAL SOUL. BLESSED FOR EVER BE THE BELIEF IN CHRIST; FOR IT STRENGTHENS POOR, WEAK SINNERS.”

In the lowly cell, which had been consecrated by her long residence, the aged ecclesiastic who buried her took up, from thenceforward, his abode.

Years after her remains had rotted to earth in that silent desert, Griso, now no longer young, in the eager pursuit of a noble stag, insensibly strayed towards the heart of the Seven Mountains. The poor hunted animal took refuge at the foot of the cross, as if it there felt some consciousness of protection; and the hunter, whose soul the memory of former times, the recollection of the ineffaceable past, overcame at the moment, forbore to strike him, for the sake of her he once loved so fondly. The tombstone caught his eye. He approached it with an indefinable sensation of dread.

“ Alas! alas!” cried he, as he read the inscription; “ alas! and is this your last resting-place, my Friedhilda, my beautiful, my own?”

Sorrow fell upon him, and deep grief; he could not contain

himself nor control his emotions; and the bearded man wept aloud, like a fond girl, or an afflicted child.

The old priest came forth at the sound of human lamentation.

"Knew you aught of the tenant of this tomb?" asked he of the mourner.

Griso answered, "Yea, I knew her well."

"Mayhap you would hear of her last moments?" inquired the aged man.

"She was mine—I lost her—I am the cause of it all!" sobbed Griso, in an agony of grief.

The old priest told him of her life and of her holy death.

Griso's heart grew softened at the relation, and the light of truth flashed steadily on his soul as the sad tale proceeded.

"It must be a noble faith!" soliloquized he aloud, when the old man had concluded his story. "I will follow her; where she is, there I shall go too. Her home shall be my home, her God shall be my God."

He prayed the old priest to teach him the faith of Christ. It was soon done. He then received at his hands the sacrament of baptism.

It would seem as though the old man was solely preserved by Heaven for the pious purpose of uniting that pair of fond hearts, who, "lovely in life, in death were not to be divided;" for he expired, too, almost immediately after he had performed that ceremony.

Griso built there a monastery for a few Cenobites, and named it the Himmelreich, "the Kingdom of Heaven;" whence, by corruption, the modern name of the mountain. In that solitude, performing the most menial offices for the service of God, beloved by the poor, and honoured by his brethren, he died a few years afterwards, in the odour of sanctity.

So ends the story.

THE LÖWENBERG.

The last of the Seven Mountains to which allusion shall be made here is the Löwenberg. Next to the Oehlberg, it is the highest of the cluster, being 1414 feet above the level of the sea. The remains of a castle, which ages ago stood on its summit, may not be discovered even by the most painful antiquarian;

but tradition, truer to the memory of other days than time, has preserved extant this tale of one of its once bold and busy occupants.

Graf Herman von Heinsberg, so was this chieftain styled, gave up all his time to the chase; he thought of nothing else from morning until night; and the greatest part of his life was spent in the dense forests which then filled the valleys and clothed the sides of the Siebengeberge. Such was his passion for this sport, that he neglected every thing else to follow it. It was, however, a passion, the indulgence of which cost his vassals dear; for he scrupled not to follow his game over their corn-fields, and through their gardens and vineyards, to their great loss in all instances; to their utter ruin in many. But what cared he for that?—was he not their lord? If they ventured to remonstrate with him, they received only reviling and insult at the best; and those who dared to do so considered themselves fortunate indeed if they came off with these: but it was commonly his custom to set his hounds on them, and to hunt them as he would a wild beast; and then happy was the man who escaped without sustaining some grievous injury or deadly harm from the fangs of these blood-thirsty animals. It would be an extraordinary anomaly in human nature indeed, if, under these circumstances, the Graf Herman von Heinsberg was beloved by his vassals; nor scarcely need it be said, that the contrary was the case—that he was thoroughly hated by them, and that his name was a byword of fear, and hatred, and reproach, among them and their families and children. With those of his own class and condition, the lords of the adjacent mountains, and the barons who dwelt on the river shores, he was not a favourite either; for, too rugged even for the rude forms of society which then existed—his manners formed, as it were, in the forests, on the model of the inferior animals—he was scarcely less obnoxious to them than to his own retainers. To crown his unpopularity, he found no favour even in the eyes of the then all-powerful church; for he desecrated the saints' days and the Lord's day, by following his favourite pursuit without clerical permission; and once he had actually threatened to hunt the Abbot of Heisterbach himself, for calling at his castle with the intention of reclaiming him from his devotion to such vain and

wicked sports. But for these things he cared little, if at all : he lived in the woods ; he made friends of his dogs ; and the only human beings whom he tolerated were his yagers or huntsmen. All sympathy with his fellow men, if ever he had felt any, seemed completely obliterated from his mind. Such was, at this era, the Graf Hermann von Heinsberg.

It was on the eve of a holy festival (thus the tale runs), that he hunted in the woods which then surrounded the base of the Löwenberg Mountain. Night fell unawares on him, as he eagerly pursued a noble hart o' grease ; and in the ardour of the chase he found that he had far outstripped his followers. To add to his vexation at this untoward circumstance, his quarry suddenly disappeared, but whither he could not trace—how, he could not discover. The darkness of the night every moment increased, and he was completely at a loss to find a path from the small open space in the forest, on which he paced up and down in a fit of impotent rage and aggravated disappointment. Could it be the wood where he had hunted so often,—which he was accustomed to from childhood?—Was he asleep or awake?—Did he act in reality, or did he only dream? Such were the questions he put to himself in his perplexity, as in every effort to make his way onwards he encountered insurmountable obstacles, or became more and more entangled in the dreary wilderness. In vain did he endeavour to cut his way through the dense underwood which impeded his passage—in vain did he peer into the interstices of the thickly matted boughs, branches, and dense, dark foliage, for the slightest opening. None was visible—his labour was without effect. Stranger and stranger still did the scene seem to him as the night advanced, and his efforts relaxed—more and more inextricable and confounded did he find himself in that wild forest ;—he was buried, as it were, in its depths. But then, what a forest ! He taxed his memory to the utmost, but he still had no recollection of ever seeing that part of it before ; and yet what seemed to him the strangest of all was, the circumstance of having a full and complete consciousness that there existed no part of it untraversed by him in

his long and various peregrinations. It was like a dreadful dream, and he felt all the pangs which, in sleep, the idea of involuntary action usually produces. His strength nearly exhausted, his spirits depressed to the lowest point, and his brain on fire, he at length succeeded in reaching, about the midnight hour, a large open space. Tall trees towered high above it; thick brushwood shut it in as with a massive wall; and the long, faint shadows of the trees fell dimly upon the green sward. Silence sat heavily on the bosom of the earth. Wearied almost to fainting, maddened in mind and pained in body, he flung himself on the turf, and there enjoyed, for a few moments, the delicious sensation of rest. As he thus lay, he mused on the toils he had undergone, and speculated on those he had still to undergo; and he now and then thought of the mystery which seemed to envelope him, and the strangeness of that wild place. But between recollection of the past and anticipation of the future, the present was insensibly exercising its power: in other words, a deep sleep irresistibly fell on his heavy eyelids. All of a sudden, however, he was aroused by an audible rustling in the adjacent brushwood: he sprang up—his eyes glistened with delight.

“ ’Tis my quarry! ’tis my quarry!” he cried.

Seizing his spear, he whistled to the only two dogs which had kept up with him to follow, and who now lay the one beside him, the other at his feet. But the dogs would not stir from the spot where they lay; neither threats, nor caresses, chastisement, nor entreaty, could make them move. Crouched on the earth, their hair bristling on end, their eyes like balls of fire, they gazed with fear and trembling on the quarter whence the noise came, and seemed to heed or see naught else. Again their master called them, but still they would not stir; they only whined piteously, and kept their eyes intently fixed on the underwood. Graf Hermann now approached the spot alone, keeping his spear poised in the attitude of defence, and prepared to penetrate the thick belt of brush which presented itself as the only obstacle between him and his prey. Just, however, as he made a first effort to enter it, a stately looking man, of noble mien and bearing, garbed in the most antique guise then known, sprang forth as if sharply pursued. The stranger bore a large cross-bow in his right hand,

a curved hunting-horn hung at his baldric, and an old-fashioned *couteau de chasse* depended from his girdle.

Waving off Hermann with one hand, with the other he raised the horn to his lips, and blew a blast thereon that might have awoken the dead, so long, so loud, so deep, so shrilly was it. The mountains and the valleys caught up the sound in a thousand echoing modulations; the whimpering hounds whined an accord in their wildest tones of fear and anguish; the forest-trees shook in concert, and the air was filled in every direction with its horrific echoes. And it did awake the dead: for scarcely had it ceased, when it seemed caught up by a thousand shouting tongues; and in a moment more that open space was covered with hundreds of skeleton hunters, all mounted on skeleton stags of the largest size and strongest description.

“Yoick! yoick!” shouted the ghastly crew, as they spurred their antlered steeds on the track of the stately stranger.

“Mercy! mercy!” screamed their victim, in tones of the deepest anguish, as he sought to evade the pursuit.

It was, indeed, a fearful sight to see,—that awful chase! Ever as the stately stranger fled before his fierce pursuers, did he shriek aloud as one in mortal agony, and cry to them for mercy, the big tears coursing each other piteously adown his pallid cheeks; and ever as they followed did they crack their whips with fearful sound, and clatter their skeleton hands against the necks and sides of their skeleton steeds, as in encouragement, shouting all the while, with most fiendish glee,

“Yoick! yoick!—ho! ho! ho! ho!”

For a full hour was Graf Hermann fettered to the spot on which he stood, as by some invisible agency; during that period he was compelled to be a painful witness of all that passed. He could not stir from the centre of the open space, whither he had retreated on the first appearance of the stranger, and there he stood as the pivot, round which that hellish hunt was performed, sweating at every pore, and each particular hair on his head standing on end with dread,

“Like quills o’ the fretful porcupine.”

For a full hour had this scene been enacted, when he felt that he could endure no longer to behold it. His spirits sunk

within him, his eyes swam, his limbs failed, consciousness fled from him, and he fell on the green sward stiff and senseless. When he recovered, which must have been in a very brief space of time, the spectres had all disappeared; the place was lone and empty; and only the stately stranger, the object of their pursuit, was visible to him. The hapless wretch stood over the count, and appeared anxiously to watch his returning perception: ever and anon his broad breast heaved and fell as though it were not sufficiently capacious to hold his throbbing heart. Graf Hermann arose, and looked long and sadly on his strange companion in that solitude; a quick melancholy glance was all the averted eye of the other gave in return. As the count slowly recovered, his recollection of the fearful sight he had witnessed returned also, in all its dreadful distinctness; he shuddered, and was silent. At length he summoned courage, and addressed the stranger.

“Who and what are you?—Say!” He crossed himself as he spoke, and felt a degree of confidence imparted to him by the holy act.

To this question the stranger made no reply; but he sighed mournfully. Again did Hermann put it, and again for answer did he get only a remorseful aspiration.

“I adjure you, in the name of the most high God,” said he on the third asking, “speak!”

“The spell is broken,” were the first words uttered by the stranger; “listen!”

He beckoned Hermann to his side: they were seated. He then proceeded:—

“I am thy great ancestor. Like you, I loved the chase more than I loved our holy faith;—like you, in pursuit of my pleasures, I spared no human being: no sex, no age, man, woman, nor child. It was all the same to me, their pains or their pleasures, provided that mine were not affected by them. When they interfered with me, I shewed them no mercy, for ruth or pity felt I none. A season of scarcity came; blight fell on the land; the harvest was destroyed; no food was to be had for the famishing wretches that dwelt on the river shores, or abode in these mountain valleys. In the extremity of their distress they broke into my forests; raging with hunger, they destroyed and carried off my game. The appetites of their miserable offspring were ap-

peased, but they lost their lives for it. I was beside myself with rage; my anger knew no bounds; I swore I would have a human life for every head of game they slaughtered; I swore to exterminate all the delinquents. I kept my oath. Arming my retainers and my domestics, my servants and my huntsmen, I seized on them; in the dead of the night I pounced on my prey; and tearing them from their weeping wives and helpless children, I hurried them to my castle—it is yours now—and I flung them into the deepest dungeon in its wide precincts. There I let them lie for three days. During that time, however, I ordered a great number of the largest and strongest deer that could be found in my forests to be caught and enclosed in the outer court-yard; and I commanded also that my hounds should be kept without food or water at the same time. On the morning of the third day I had my prisoners brought forth; they were reduced by a full hundred in those three days: Famine had made a rare feast on them. I then commanded my ready retainers to bind a man of the survivors on each stag: they were all stripped naked, and were without any defence or protection. I next ordered my best steeds to be saddled, and the doors of my kennels to be thrown open. The famished hounds within bayed furiously as they smelt their game; they rushed forth like a living deluge. Off went the deer, each with his human load;—off went the deep-mouthed, hungry hounds, yelling like fierce devils—even as so many starved wolves with their prey in sight, did they tear along; my mounted retainers kept shouting with fiendish glee the while, and hallooing the eager hounds on to the savage chase. By the fall of eve there was not a stag or his rider left alive; the forest in every direction was strewed with the torn and mangled corpses of men and animals. The famished dogs in their fury did not discriminate between man and beast; and we urged them on to worry and tear both without pause and without mercy. The last of the unfortunate wretches suffered on the very spot we now stand on. Oh, that was a dreadful day! But God amply avenged the slaughter of his creatures. That night I died, and I am now suffering the eternal torments of the damned. It is a part of my heavy punishment to be nightly hunted, as you have witnessed, by the skeletons of my murdered victims. The pursuit commences near the castle court, passes over our old track in the

forest, and ends here where we now stand—on this spot, accursed alike of God and of man. A thousand and a thousand times repeated—over, and over, and over again—I endure all the agonies I compelled them to suffer on that dreadful day. The justice of God has doomed me to such a fearful mode of requital : until the last day must I endure it ; and then shall I be hunted over the burning wastes of hell by legions of foul spirits, in the same manner as I now am hunted nightly on this earth. Take warning by my fate. The finger of Providence it is that pointed your path hither :—return to thy home ; repent thee of thy crimes ; and be wiser in the future. Love your fellow-creatures, even as God loves them—be kind to the poor—following the maxims of Religion, respect her teachers—go and be wise. ‘The wages of sin is death ;’—alas ! alas ! and wo is me to know it.”

With these words, the phantom fled in a single moment, and nothing of life was left near the count but his crouching hounds, who had crept fearfully to his feet ; nothing was heard in that unbroken silence, save the throbbings of his own heart ; all was night, and gloom, and solitude. He sat down slowly to muse awhile upon what he had seen and heard, and a deep sleep fell on him as he sat : he woke not until the sun was riding high in the heavens. With very little difficulty he now found his way from the forest ; at its verge his huntsmen and retainers were anxiously awaiting him. He returned to the castle in silence ; his heart was full of the scene which had passed before him the preceding night.

From henceforth, and for ever after while he lived, he was an altered man : a friend to the poor and the houseless—a good lord to his vassals—a good master to his servants—a good neighbour—and a munificent benefactor to the church ; he lived in peace and amity with all, and died universally regretted. With him the direct line of descent in his family became extinct, and his title and possessions were inherited by the head of a collateral branch of the noble stock to which he belonged.

NONNENWÖRTH—ROLANDSECK.

Just above Drachenfels, continuing the ascent of the Rhine, stands a small but beautifully verdant island in the middle of the river. This island is named Nonnenwörth, from having been for a series of ages the site of a celebrated nunnery. On the other side of the stream, overlooking the island, is a high basaltic rock, surmounted by a few fragments of mouldering walls and ivy-wreathed ruins. This rock and these ruins are named Rolandseck. Island, and rock, and ruin, are linked together by one of those exquisite fictions with which the shores of the Rhine are every where teeming, and which make the beautiful in natural scenery still more beautiful, by associating with it some of the sweetest and most elevating characteristics of our nature.

Roland, Count of Angers, first of the twelve peers of France, Paladin of the holy Roman empire, and nephew of the most powerful monarch the world then knew—Charlemagne—is the favourite hero of romance, and the darling object of almost universal legend. He has been the theme of Italian epics, of Spanish ballads, of French fabulous chronicles, of English commentaries, of German traditions, and of Latin falsehoods. Ariosto and Boiardo have hymned his madness and his love in strains of mingled gracefulness and majesty, which will live for ever ;—numberless, but, alas ! nameless, have been the authors of the thousand romances and *cancioneras* to which his exploits have given birth in the Iberian Peninsula ;—he stands forth the most prominent figure in the gorgeous pictures of his period, drawn in the apocryphal chronicles of early France, one of its noblest peers, one of its greatest champions ;—the lying ecclesiastic, Turpin, has written of his deeds in that barbarous dialect of churchmen in the middle ages, miscalled Latin ;—our own Gibbon has not disdained to embalm his memory in the magnificent pages of his greatest work ;—and Germany claims him as her noblest son, claims him in life and in death, in the immortal song of her Schiller, in the tender and truthful strains of her Uhland, and in a countless crowd of shadowy legends, revered traditions, and trusted historical fragments, her own, her bravest, her best.

According to the last-named authorities, Rolandseck is the spot on which that brave knight, that illustrious peer, that accomplished paladin, breathed his last; and Nonnenwörth, the lovely little island reposing on the bosom of the stream beneath it, was the abode of the ladye of his love, for whose sake he lived a cenobite and died in mournful solitude. The tale they tell is a simple tale, but truthful—to nature at the least;—and it is exciting in no ordinary degree to our fondest and gentlest sympathies.

It boots not to enter upon a narrative of the early deeds of Roland here, or to tell how hapless were the various amours in which he engaged. The loftiest poets of chivalry have made them their own, to the exclusion of all meaner minstrels; and while poesy possesses charms, and song is dear to the soul, they will be familiar as household words to the minds of all civilized men. But it may still be permitted to an humble narrator to tell a tale of the final close of his bright career, not told by these master-spirits of their age;—a tale endeared to the memory of millions speaking a language which they believed to be barbarous, and with the legendary treasures of which it is to be presumed, therefore, they were unacquainted;—a story of hapless love, but not of love unrequited; of disappointment; of sorrow; of death. Thus tints tradition with its mellowed hues that painful but still pleasant picture of the past.

Upon a time,—some thousand years ago,—when the leaves were green and the meadows beginning to put forth their young flowers, Roland, the noblest paladin of chivalry, the nephew of Charlemagne, journeyed from Ingelheim palace, the residence of his uncle, adown the shores of the beautiful and bounding Rhine. His object was to see Spring in all her loveliness bedeck this the loveliest valley in the world, and to view the charms of Nature in all their freshness, and prime, and budding youth, and early brilliancy. He was alone, like all true knights-errant of the period; not even a squire accompanied him on his course. As the evening fell, he looked around for a homestead, and sought somewhere for a shelter from the dews of night. His glance lighted on a stately castle, which then stood on the summit of the Wolkenberg, but scarce a stone of which now remains

to tell of its existence. It was at that period, however, the hospitable abode of an aged and an honourable knight and his only daughter, a youthful virgin of surpassing beauty and virtue. Roland approached the portcullis of the castle, and craved admittance of the warder; and the warder, after communicating his name, returned speedily with his lord to admit the illustrious stranger.

“Ten thousand welcomes to the noble and valiant Roland, the pride of chivalry, and the brightest ornament of our far-famed court!” exclaimed the aged knight, shaking him at the same time heartily by the hand. “Enter, and be at home—my castle is yours while you honour it with your presence.”

Roland thanked him with the courtesy of a true paladin, and entered the court-yard.

“Bring the best that my castle can afford,” cried the old man to his menials, when his guest and he were seated in the spacious Ritter-saal; “and bid my dear daughter herself wait on our noble guest.”

The domestics disappeared to execute his command.

Hildegunda, his fair daughter, soon after entered, bearing a salver of bread and wine in her fair hands. She was followed by a long train of menials, bearing also all the *matériel* necessary for a sumptuous banquet. Approaching the young knight, and, gracefully bending, she poured out a goblet of the generous liquor, and offered it to his acceptance; bread was also offered by her, in conformity with the ancient custom. She blushed as she did so, much more deeply than the purple blazonry on the rich stained glass which she handed to the hero, requesting him to drink of it and do their poor house honour.

Roland was like a man in a dream. As she stood before him,

“In the pride of youth and beauty,
With a garland on her brow,”

He felt that never before had he beheld any thing half so beautiful; and he blushed, too, until it seemed as though his soul was in his face, and his face but a reflection of the emotions of her gentle spirit. He took the proffered goblet, and drained it off to her health.

“Never before,” thought he to himself, “have I trembled as

I do now ; not even when under the cimeters of the Saracens, the glaves of the Huns, the maces of the Saxons, or the lances of the Moorish chivalry."

He tried to resume his wonted equanimity, but he could not at all succeed. The flame of love had been lighted in his heart ; and ever since the world existed, love has laughed at philosophy as well as at folly. Until a late hour he entertained the maiden and her aged sire with relations of the battles he had been in : and

" He spoke of most disastrous chances,
Of moving accidents by flood and field ;
Of hair-breadth 'scapes i' the imminent deadly breach ;"

until, like Desdemona,

" She gave him for his pains a world of sighs,
And swore, in faith, 'twas passing strange—
'Twas pitiful—'twas wondrous pitiful."

And then, how could it be otherwise ? — for when did valour ever fail to win a woman's gentle heart ? —

" She loved him for the dangers he had passed,
And he loved her that she did pity them."

She retired to her chamber and pressed her couch ; but it was not to rest, for sleep never once visited her during the entire night. Roland, too, was wakeful, with the tumultuous emotions which now for the first time filled his manly heart ; and, notwithstanding the fatigue of the day, he could obtain no more than a few snatches of broken and uneasy slumber. In the morning he was stirring betimes, and would fain have taken his departure at an early hour ; but the hospitable old knight would not hear of it ; and his fair daughter so effectually backed his suit by her blushing looks and speaking glances, that Roland consented to remain their guest for another day. At dinner he was entertained by an ancient harper, who sang of his prowess and of his feats of arms against the barbarians and the infidels. Few words passed between him and the fair Hildegunda ; yet still it was easy to perceive how matters stood with both. They were conscious of the highest happiness human nature can know—

" They loved, and were beloved."

Another and another day did Roland tarry in her father's halls, powerless, as it were, to depart. His love had in that time become so strong, that it overmastered all his faculties. He felt that he could no more call himself free,—that he was now the creature of another—but of what another?—a being so bright, so beautiful, so angelic, had never before blessed the earth with her presence! It could not be endured by him any longer; he determined to confess his love at once, and to sue for grace to the arbitress of his fate. A favourable opportunity soon presented itself. One day, at the hour of high noon, he walked into the cool shade of the castle garden. Musing upon the object of his every thought, he traversed its most retired paths; passionately he over and over again repeated her name, and at every step he took, put up a prayer to heaven for her happiness. Lo! he beholds something which strikes him motionless—a female form flashes on his vision. It is she—it is his own Hildegunda! He scarcely dares to breathe. What does she there? She sleeps the sleep of innocence and peace.

He approached softly;—there knelt his ladye love, wrapped in a deep slumber; her fair hands were folded together, as though she were overtaken by its influence ere she was aware of its presence, in the form and attitude of prayer. A gentle dream seemed to stir her soul to its inmost depths, for a smile of surpassing sweetness sat on her murmuring lips, and gave light and life to her beauteous brow. What could she thus murmur? He lays his ear closer to her mouth.

“Roland, Roland,” whispered she, in tones like the murmurs of an Eolian harp, when the soft breath of summer is on its strings.

He could hear no more. She awoke with the burning kiss which he imprinted on her lovely lips. She was enfolded in her fond lover's arms.

Need it be told what followed—how he prayed her pardon, and how he obtained her love? He knew not well what to say; but his silence was more eloquent than any words. There is no eloquence like that of true passion—no persuasion like that inspired by affection. Hildegunda was equally abashed as he; she, too, was at a loss what to reply to his tacit passion. In this extremity she picked up some rose-buds which lay scattered

about and beside them on the garden path. They were not half of such a hue as her burning cheeks—not half so beautiful as her young and innocent blushes.

“Ladye fair,” spake the paladin gravely, bending lowly on one knee, as beseemed a true knight — “Ladye fair, I prithee bestow but one of those beauteous rose-buds on your captived slave, and he shall be your servitor for ever.”

Hildegunda, as it were involuntarily, stretched forth her hand to him; her heart was in it. In a moment it was covered with fervent kisses, notwithstanding her maiden struggles. Every moment, however, if truth be told, her resistance was less, and her struggles grew fainter. They soon altogether ceased.

“Ladye of my love,” said Roland, as he placed the flower she had given him in front of his helmet as his future *gage d’amour*, “until now, never have I borne a token of female affection which my heart misgave not. When my companions, the paladins of my great uncle’s court, rallied me on my single-heartedness, and spoke high of their ladies’ loveliness, I could say naught. I cast down my eyes and remained silent, perhaps sad. Now, I shall beard the bravest who vaunts of his mistress’s beauty in my presence,—compel him to vail her pretensions to thine, and to acknowledge thee—my own love—as the most lovely in the world.”

Hildegunda blushed again more deeply than before.

“Beauty quickly fades,” were the only words she uttered; and they were almost whispered.

There is scant occasion to say further how Roland pressed his suit—how he told the maiden of his love, and how he sware to her his troth. As gentle Ophelia says—

“Young men will do’t,
When they come to’t.”

It was evident that Hildegunda was happy; but this was to be gathered at the onset more from her looks than from her words or actions. At length, however, she found voice; and, encouraged by his ardour, reciprocated the affection he expressed, to the full as much as maiden modesty permitted. Long ere they left the garden they had interchanged pledges, and vowed eternal constancy to each other; and it was then and there

agreed upon between them, that, at the termination of the expedition which Charlemagne then purposed sending into Spain, Roland should return at once to the shores of the Rhine, and claim the lovely Hildegunda as his bride. They were happy—for the moment.

A few brief days after the occurrence of this eventful scene, Roland took his departure for Ingelheim, thence to proceed to the fatal Pyrenees.

The parting of the lovers was painful to the last degree.

Neither said a word, but they gazed on each other in silence; she with tearful eyes and pallid countenance, and he with a glance which seemed to say that his noble heart was wholly a prey to grief and deep sorrow. From thenceforth Hildegunda lived only in the past; she was all unconscious of the present; and what was passing around had for her no further interest. Painfully did she count over the lagging hours until intelligence should arrive from her lover; bitterly did she chide old Time for the tardiness of his flight; heavily did she sigh and weep, as day after day idly passed over. But months, and days, and hours, brought her no tidings of Roland; she was in utter ignorance of his fate. It is true, that rumours of his fame, and tales of his prowess and daring, had frequently reached her ears, either through the mouths of the mariners who came up the Rhine from Friesland, or down the river from Helvetia; but still they were only based upon the popular breath; and, at all events, there came no private communication to her from her lover. And so

“ She pined in thought,”

like the lady in the play

“ And let concealment, like a worm i’ the bud,
Feed on her damask cheek.”

Her only delight, and a sad delight it seems to be, was to sit of a still summer’s evening—“ to muse o’er flood and fell”—to hear the echo of the popular songs, which were even then sung in honour of her lover, wafted up to her garden-bower with the odorous airs of the valley. There would she sit and weep until her tender heart was well nigh broken; for she deemed herself deserted by him she held dearest of all on the earth—a lone,

solitary, hopeless being in the world ;—and she wished no longer to live.

“ The world was not for her, nor the world’s arts.”

Full a twelvemonth had thus sped sadly over her head, when one evening a toil-worn knight came to her father’s castle-gate, and prayed the hospitality of the owner. It was at once accorded to him, with the welcome and heartiness of ancient days. The stranger, it turned out, had served in the wars with Charlemagne, and was then on his return homeward after the disastrous defeat of that prince in the Pyrenees. He told the old knight of many passages in the recent campaign against the infidels in which he had been engaged, and related various anecdotes of the commanders of that hapless army. Hildegunda was soon made aware of the stranger knight’s tales ; and she speedily left the solitude of her chamber to see him, and hear intelligence of her lover.

“ Sir, knight,” said she, with a throbbing heart, wan cheek, and tearful eye, “ how fares it with Sir Roland ? I ask not if you know him ; for who is there that does not ? ”

“ Roland, alas ! ” replied the stranger, “ is no more ; he fell beside me at Roncesvalles, mortally wounded.”

Hildegunda heard no more ; she sunk senseless to the earth. In that state she was borne to her chamber by her attendant damsels and her affrighted father.

The stranger, sorrowing for the misery he had so unwittingly caused, tarried not longer in the castle than until the dawning of the next day. At cock-crow he departed.

Eight days and eight nights did the fair Hildegunda continue in a state of utter apathy and total abstraction ; knowing no one that approached her, not even her aged sire, and heedless of all that passed in her presence. Every means that human ingenuity could devise were employed to arouse her from this deadly lethargy ; but they were all in vain. Pale and motionless, with nor stir nor sound escaping from her lips to shew that she still lived, during the entire of that period

“ She sat, like Patience on a monument,”

but not

“ Smiling at Grief,”

for she smiled not at all; her marble countenance never for a moment relaxing in its deathlike serenity. Music and song were tried to soothe her, but they had no effect; tears and prayers were used, but she heard or heeded them not; even the caresses of her heart-broken father—he whom she prized above all on earth, except her lost lover—failed altogether to bring her back to a consciousness of existence. On the morning of the ninth day she recovered as suddenly as she had been smitten, to the great joy of her sire, and of all within the castle. That day and night she spent in prayer and meditation, shut up alone in her chamber, communing only with her God: the next morning she prayed her father's permission to commence a novitiate in the nunnery of Frauenwörth, for such was then the name of the little island since called Nonnenwörth. It was a sad thing for the good old man to hear; but he could not refuse her pious request. The Archbishop of Cologne, his near relative, in whose diocese the nunnery was situated, curtailed the time usually spent in the novitiate, in consequence of her earnest desire to be admitted at once to take the black veil; and in three months from that fatal day she had spoken the irrevocable vow which bound her for ever to the service of God.

Late autumn was now on the land; the lingering summer had some time departed. It was evening, and the sun was sinking in one of those masses of golden cloud so peculiar to the Rhine valley at that period of the year. A knight, on a foaming steed, was seen urging the noble animal along the pebbled shore of the river, and then taking a short cut across the country to the base of the Siebengebirge, or Seven Mountains. Before the night fell his course was traced to the summit of the Strömberg, and immediately after he was perceived to enter the portals of the castle. It was Roland—it was the long-lost paladin. He had come, in accordance with his plighted vow, to claim the gentle Hildegunda as his own—his bride.

The old knight was thunderstruck. The wounds which time had in some sort cicatrized were now torn open afresh. However, he bade the noble paladin a warm welcome, and proffered him, in all heartiness, the hospitality of that primitive

period. Roland asked eagerly after his fair daughter, Hildgunda.

"She is now the bride of heaven," spake the sire, with a heavy sigh.

Few words sufficed to tell all the circumstances of the sorrowful story. Grief is not at all communicative in its severe moods, and that sire's was of the severest. The old knight related to Roland how his daughter had withered, like a young flower rudely nipped by chilling winds and unseasonable weather; how she had pined, on hearing the narrative of her lover's death; and how she had then, with his hardly extorted consent, devoted the remainder of her mortal existence to the service of heaven. Roland then related how he had been left for dead on the field of Roncevalles, and how he had with difficulty been restored to life by the pious care and almost paternal attention of a mountain shepherd. "Even now," he said, "I am not altogether recovered, or effectually cured of my many severe wounds." He shewed them to the old knight, as he spake. They still looked fresh, and green, and scantily scarred.

Next morning the forlorn lover returned to Ingelheim, but he returned not so rapidly thither as he had left it but the day before. He was a miserable man.

A few days sufficed to settle all his worldly affairs—a few words to tell the resolution he had formed. This done, he again left the court circle—again abandoned his relatives and friends, and returned once more to the Seven Mountains, adown the banks of the Rhine, garbed as a pilgrim. He now went afoot, but still he was alone, as before. On the summit of the rock which overlooks the island of Nonnenwörth, and the sacred edifice it then contained, he built with his own hands a rude cell, a few remains of which are still believed to exist, and there took up his residence for the brief remainder of his wretched life. On a stone bench which he raised beside the narrow doorway would he sit for hours together, from the first chime of the matin bell even to the last note of the vesper hymn, which floated across the river, and ascended, like fragrant incense, to his rocky dwelling, looking fondly down on the abode of his lost love.

Days, and months, and years, did he thus spend in hapless,

hopeless pain, and expectation. Ever and anon would he deem to detect the sweet, silvery tones of his Hildegunda's voice in the rich stream of sacred melody which daily arose from the valley, and encompassed his humble abode, filling his heart with holy calm and peaceful pleasure; and more than once did he think to catch a glimpse of her fair and fragile form in the sanctified train of pious virgins who wound beneath the cloisters of the nunnery far below his point of vision. It might be so, or it might not: but he believed it firmly as faith itself; and he was happy in the fond belief. Why should the last prop be struck away from the tottering spirit? Late in the night, when the storm raged without, and the lashed waves of the river echoed the loud roar of the wintry wind, he would watch the light in the cell of his lost one, which he learned to know through the friendship of the aged confessor of the nunnery; he would watch its tremulous beam through the tempest and the darkness, even as a fond mother watches the lamp of life in an expiring child; and when it was visible later than usual, he would wait until it had been extinguished, and then haply retire to his lowly pallet content with his lot, filled with the hope that she had prolonged her prayers for him. Sleep would ever overtake him, heaping blessings on her head, and invoking for her soul the protection of the Omnipotent. Intense grief, wearisome watchings, and privations of a kind to which he was altogether unaccustomed, soon, however, had their usual effect on Roland; the pride of chivalry, the first paladin of the West, was reduced, at the end of two years, to a shadow of his former self, to a wasted skeleton of his wonted strength and power. The flower of his youth was withered; his heart was crushed; his affections were extinct; his spirits sunken, or fled for ever. But his sorrows were soon to have an end.

One dreary morning in mid-winter, when the snow lay deep on the hills and in the valleys, and the little island beneath seemed like a swan's feather on a deep dark pool—a white speck on the black current of the river—he strained his failing eyes, to look as was his custom upon the nunnery and on the grounds adjacent to it. The first object which met his gaze was an open grave. A few minutes afterwards a mourning procession of nuns, headed by the hoary old confessor, and followed by the

lady abbess, emerged from the convent chapel and moved slowly along towards that last resting-place of poor mortality. Roland looked and looked again;—his soul was stirred within him;—he was deeply moved: he felt anxious and uneasy—he scarce knew why; his spirit was troubled—he wist not wherefore. The mourning train swept past in such a manner as to expose itself laterally to his view. In the centre of the sad concourse he could see a coffin covered with the white-fringed pall—the emblem of virginity. The last solemn ceremony commenced;—the funeral rites were administered: the coffin was committed to the earth;—the requiem for the dead sunk heavily on his heart;—its faint, dying notes, stole slowly up to his rocky abode through the thick haze of that dreary morning.

“Ashes to ashes, dust to dust:” he thought he could hear the clod strike the coffin and the priest pronounce these words. Sense and motion then fled from him for a period. When he revived and gazed again, the mourners were gone, and he was alone, looking out on that dreary solitude. In a few hours the old confessor paid him his usual daily visit, and told him all: it was even as his too prophetic heart had anticipated; his Hildgunda was dead; and he had, that morning, been the sad witness of her interment.

“Shrive me and sain me, quick,” spake he to the holy man; “I feel that I am not much longer for this world.”

The pious old priest did even as he was bade. The remainder of the day was spent by both in prayer and humble supplication to the throne of mercy. It was evident that the last moments of the paladin were fast approaching.

“My child,” said the aged confessor, solemnly, “I can proffer you no hopes of life in this world; but you are sure of eternal happiness in the next. Your remaining hours here are numbered; you will not survive yon sunset.”

“I know it,” replied the still undaunted paladin, “I know it, and I fear it not. Roland never yet dreaded death.”

“Roland!” exclaimed the old priest, in deep amaze. “Roland!”

The tale of the noble paladin’s hapless love was soon related; it was a great astonishment to his ancient auditor to hear it.

“Now, father,” said he, on its conclusion, “lead me forth.

I would fain sit on that bench yonder, and die, at the same moment with the lamp of day ; my last look turned on the resting-place of my beloved Hildegunda, as my last sigh will be but the echo of her dear name."

The father assisted him forth ; and he also sat beside and sustained him on the bench, where, at the same hour every day, the paladin had sat for so many revolving seasons. The last rays of the wintry sun were faintly tinging the tops of the Seven Mountains with that roseate hue so peculiar to wintry sunsets, and so beautiful in itself, beyond all the power of painting. Roland looked eagerly around him and on every thing within his view, as though he would fain fill his spirit with the fair scene before he left this earth, to recall it again in the bowers of Paradise.

"Father," said he, gently, "I die—I die!"

At that moment a burst of rich plaintive melody came full on the breeze, and was borne, in a thousand exquisite modulations,

up the acclivitous side of the mountain. It was the final requiem sang in the chapel by the holy inmates of the nunnery, for the soul of their departed sister ; and it sounded in the ears of the dying hero like the voice of a chorus of angels welcoming his flitting spirit to heaven.

“ Thank God, thank God ! ” he exclaimed, faintly, as with his last breath ; “ my Hildegunda—I hear her voice—she calls me ! I come—I come ! Farewell ! ”

He died in the arms of the old priest, and was buried in an erect position, on the spot where he expired, with his face turned towards the tomb of his beloved. It was his own wish. Since then, that hill has been called Rolandseck.

Schiller has versified this legend in one of his most popular ballads ; but he has,—not wisely, it is admitted by all,—transferred the scene of the tale from the shores of the Rhine to the Toggenburg, a high mountain in the canton of St. Gall, in Switzerland. His ballad runs nearly thus, in a free English version :—

KNIGHT TOGGENBURG.

Knight, true sister-love may solely
 Feel this heart for thee ;
 Ask not other love, unholy
 Grief 'twould give to me.
 Calm, I hence can see thee hieing ;
 Hither coming, too ;
 But thy silent tears and sighing,
 Calm can I not view.

Horror-struck he hears her ; rudely
 Back his heart's blood springs ;
 In his arms he clasps her mutely,
 On his steed he flings.
 To far Switzerland then sending
 For his warriors best ;
 To the holy tomb they're wending,
 Cross'd upon each breast.

Deathless deeds is there achieving
His heroic arm ;
High his helmet plumes are heaving,
Where foes thickest swarm.
And "the Toggenburger" shouted,
Frights the Mussulman ;
Still his soul, from sorrow rooted,
Naught dissever can.

Full a year thus passed he rueing,
But more sore he grieves ;
Peace he finds is vain pursuing,
So the host he leaves :
Sees a barque with sails outswelling,
Weigh from Joppa's shore ;
To the land of his love's dwelling
Turns he home once more.

At her castle-gate alighting,
Loud the pilgrim rung ;
But his every fond hope blighting,
Hears he as they're swung.
" She you seek, the veil now wearing,
" Is the bride of heaven ;
" Yester's feast, as night was nearing,
" She to God was given."

Now forsakes he, and for ever,
His paternal towers ;
Arms nor true-steed more may never
Glad his darkened hours.
From the Toggenburg descending,
Fares he forth unknown,
With coarse hair-cloth's folds defending
His bold limbs alone.

And he built a lowly dwelling
By her convent's bound,
Where the dusky lindens' swelling,
Gloom'd the cloisters round.

There, what time morn's fair gleam lightened,
 'Till eve's last ray shone,
 His pale face by fond hope brightened,
 Sate he all alone.

Gazing on that cloister stay'd he ;
 Hours he there would hang,
 'Till the lattice of his ladye
 Oped with welcome clang ;
 'Till her lovely looks entrancing
 All his sense the while,
 Calm adown the dale were glancing,
 Sweet as angel's smile.

Then he down would lay him joying ;
 And when sleep would sain,
 Dreams of her his soul were buoying
 'Till day dawned again.
 Thus he sate there days full many,
 Years—long years—(nor pang
 Felt he, nor complaint made any)
 For that lattice clang :

'Till her lovely looks, entrancing
 All his sense the while,
 Calm adown the dale were glancing,
 Sweet as angel's smile.
 And so sate he, there, one morning
 Lifeless—without fail,
 To that lattice loved still turning
 His cold face so pale.

It is as incontestible, however, as the scant evidence afforded us by contemporary history can make it, that the hero Roland died, not on the shores of the Rhine, but in the passes of the Pyrenees. Eginhard, the secretary of Charlemagne, relates the few particulars of his last moments which have been preserved to posterity ; and they affirm this fact : Gibbon,* following his

* " In this action the famous Rutland, Rolando, Orlando, was slain, *cum pluribus aliis*. The Spaniards," he adds, with great truth, " are too proud of

authority, states, in a note having reference to the fatal battle of Roncesvalles, that this hero fell on that celebrated field: and all the Spanish romances on the subject extant corroborate the averment of the chronicler, and verify the induction of the historian. One of the latter gives such a peculiar character to the mode of Roland's death, that it is deemed proper to insert it in these pages. It is offered more, however, as a curiosity, than as a piece of historical evidence.*

THE DEATH OF ROLAND.

“ Grim and gory, from the slaughter
Flees, defeated Charlemaine,
Through the dark, ensanguined water,
O'er the fatal fields of Spain.

Routed—ruined, all his power;
Paladins eleven slain:
Of twelve, his pride in camp and bower,
Alive does Roland but remain.

Why survives he?—Roland, no man
Equal may in might and main:
Him may none o'ercome, save woman—
Thus it is he was not slain.

To a rude old cross down kneeling,
Lifting up to heaven his eyes;
Overpowered with bitter feeling,
In a low, sad strain, he sighs:

‘ Oh, my heart! how art thou froward;
Why left I Roncesvalles alive?
Oh, my heart! how wert thou coward;
Death and vengeance why survive?

a victory which history ascribes to the Gascons, and romance to the Saracens.”—*Decline and Fall*, c. xlix. § “Reign and Character of Charlemagne.”

* Romancero de Romances Caballerescos é Históricos Anteriores al Siglo XVIII. Ordenado y Recopilado, por Don Augustin Duran. Parte I. § Romances Tradicionales de Carlo Magno y los Doce Pares.—*La Batalla de Roncesvalles*. Madrid, 1832.

Friends of my youth !—now stark and gory,
Low on stranger soil you're laid ;
Brave companions !—erst in glory,—
'To follow ye am I afraid ?'

As he spake, fast from the slaughter
Flees defeated Charlemaine,
Through the dark, ensanguined water,
O'er the fatal fields of Spain :

Crownless—trainless—wasted—weary ;
Bowed with grief his aged head.
At this sight, so sad and dreary,
Dropp'd the noble Roland dead."

That Roland was slain, either on the field of Roncesvalles, on the contiguous plains of Alventosa, or in the passes of the Pyrenees, during the flight of the Frankish army, is placed beyond question by this concurrent testimony. Tradition, always faithful to facts in the main, though fond to the last degree of embellishment, still points out the spot where he fell, in a deep gorge of these majestic mountains ; and to this day his memory is perpetuated among the simple mountaineers, by the name that spot has borne through a countless succession of ages. No one can spend a day in the neighbourhood without being invited to visit "Roland's Gap." German writers, for obvious reasons, generally make light of the memorable defeat of Charlemagne, and attribute the death of Roland to some *guerilla* parties of Biscayans, who harassed the rear of that monarch's army ; but, though history is singularly taciturn on the subject of that eventful action, there still exists enough of evidence in legend and in song to satisfy the philosophic observer of the greatness of the defeat, and the extent of the injury inflicted by it, on that mightiest sovereign of his age.

Pass we now to other topics.

RHEINBREITBACH.

THE MINE-MONK.

On the opposite shore of the Rhine, where that noble river spreads out into a wider space than it previously occupied, looking more like an extensive lake than a rapid running stream, the little town of Rheinbreitbach stands in the centre of a verdant plain, in the midst of vineyards, and gardens, and fertile fields, at the foot of the towering peaks of the Seven Mountains. At no great distance from the town, among the rugged hills in the background, looking from the river, are situated two large copper mines, one of which is called the Firneberg, the other the Marienberg. They are very ancient, and in former times were very productive: but for centuries past they have now yielded nothing; and the works have long fallen into complete decay. The first, which is indifferently named the Firneberg, and the shaft of St. Joseph, is the oldest copper mine on the Rhine; so old, indeed, is it, that the period when it was originally opened is unknown; it is, however, believed to have been in existence in the time of the Romans, and many persons attribute its formation to that powerful and enterprising people shortly after they became masters of the circumjacent country. It is now filled with water like its fellow—exhausted, neglected, and altogether useless.

The following legend is related of a disembodied being, which, in the demonology of the German people, is believed to haunt the bowels of the earth, and to hold power over all those engaged in subterranean operations.

One of the least generally known of those spirits with which the fanciful imaginations of the Teutonic race have filled earth, and sea, and sky—mines, forests, mountains, rivers, and valleys—is the Mine-spirit, better known amongst miners by the familiar appellation of Meister Hämmerling, but usually distinguished by the more appalling title of the Mine-monk. A hundred tales are told of this subterranean demon. In some of them he is represented as a being wholly and entirely evil; others describe him as composed altogether of admirable attributes; a third class of fictions seems to fix the character of complete indiffer-

ence on every one of his proceedings ; while a fourth makes him more like a mere man—a tolerably equal compound of good and bad—inoffensive and harmless, unless when thwarted or displeased—beneficent by fits and starts—capriciously kind, but never at any time to be implicitly trusted. The form in which he most commonly appears, according to the popular belief, is that of a monk of gigantic proportions, enveloped in long, flowing, black garments ; but he occasionally—indeed frequently—assumes several other shapes, some of them of a very different description. For instance, in one case recorded by tradition, he is stated to have become visible to a company of miners in the shape of a huge horse, with a most extraordinarily long neck, and one fiery eye protruding from the centre of his forehead ; in another he is represented as a monstrous bear ; while a third makes him assume the sinister aspect of a hideously deformed dwarf. His actions are as multiform as his changes of shape ; like them, too, they are marked by great inexplicability. In one shaft he is employed in the task of tormenting the miners by undoing, in their presence, what they have done,—without any assignable cause ;—maltreating them when they express their anger at this objectionable proceeding on his part, and even killing a couple of the most active and refractory outright : in another, on the contrary, he appears as the protector of these poor simple people ; taking upon himself to assert their just rights, and punishing the overseer of the works for extortions and oppressions practised on them. The stories related of him are endless, but one will suffice for these pages. It may be told thus.

It was somewhere in the beginning of the year of grace one thousand, that three honest, hard-working men, employed in the mine of St. Joseph, or the Firneberg, left their abodes in the village of Rheinbreitbach, early in the morning, to pursue their daily avocation in the bowels of the earth. They were good and pious, as well as honest and industrious men ; and no doubt they had their after-reward for these virtues. Besides their mine-lamps and the usual implements of their trade, they always carried their rosaries along with them to their work ; and it was

their custom on all occasions, before they commenced their labour of a morning, to offer up a prayer to God, first at the mouth of the shaft, and then on their reaching the bottom of the mine. On this morning, however, they neglected to perform that laudable task, either from haste, or through the necessity imposed on them of performing an extra quantity of work that day. Well would it have been for them if they had not done so! As was their wont, they were supplied with only twelve hours' oil for their lamps, and twelve hours' provisions for themselves. They reached the mouth of the mine; they descended the deep pit; they proceeded along the winding passages; and they commenced their work without delay. They had not, however, long wrought at it, when a hollow, rumbling sound, was heard all at once beneath them, and they suddenly felt the ground tremble under their feet.

"God be good to us!" exclaimed one of them; "what can this portend?"

His affrighted companions, pale, haggard, and wan, crouched to the earth in utter dismay, but uttered not a word in answer. A low, moaning sound, was all they emitted in their mortal agony.

Another shock, more violent than the former, quickly followed.

"We are lost! we are lost!—fly! fly! fly!" was the cry of the oldest miner of the three.

"Fly! fly!—we are lost! we are lost!" mechanically echoed the panic-stricken pair.

They all made as though to gain the main gallery, and thus to obtain access to the mouth of the mine; but ere they had advanced three paces towards its entrance, a third shock detached an enormous mass of rock from the tottering roof, and entirely blocked up the passage. All hope of exit was now cut off,—perhaps, for ever. It would require years of hard labour to cut a way through that mighty barrier; they had only one day's light and one day's provision; they were out of the reach of all human aid; they had no means of making their dreadful situation known, even if assistance could avail them; Death in his most horrible form—death by starvation—by lingering, slow starvation—stared them awfully in the face; they almost despaired of heaven. What was to be done? Nothing was left

them to do but to await their last hour with resignation, and to meet the grim king of terrors, when he came to summon them to their account, with the fortitude and faith of Christians.

“It is our duty, my brothers,” again spake the senior of the three, when they arose from their knees, whereon they had been some time putting up the prayers of dying men to the throne of omnipotence and mercy; “it is our duty, my brothers, to make use of the means which God has given us for our deliverance from this living death, until we can employ them no longer. Let us, then, endeavour to work our way hence. I know the task is well nigh hopeless; but I also know that nothing is too great for God to compass if he wills it that we be saved.”

“Nothing is too great for God,” responded his companions in misfortune, now somewhat recovered from their stupor; “let us even do as we best can to liberate ourselves from this living sepulchre.”

To work they went accordingly; and they relaxed only from utter exhaustion. It was now night. By this time, however, their provisions had been consumed, and their only lamp was giving forth its last, sad glimmer, previous to expiring, for want of a further supply of oil. The failing light flickered and flashed, now feebly, anon with greater intensity and force, on the rocky sides and spar-crusted roof of their dismal habitation; it was even as the light of life, now burning fiercely, now faintly, before the spirit which animates it becomes extinguished for ever. The doomed men gathered around it in silence; without a syllable of observation they mutely watched its fitful flashes; but there was the eloquence of death in their blanched and hollow cheeks—in their sunken and lustreless eyes—in their hard, short breathing;—and the throbbing of their hearts, the only sound audible in that dim solitude—told a tale of terror, and dread, and dismay, which no tongue may speak, no language express, no pen describe, and no pencil paint. But they did not now despair any longer—that evil passion had wholly departed, and left no trace on their countenances; such was the effect of their simple prayer. They felt like men for their hapless state it is true; but they also felt like men whose sinful lives had not been spent altogether unrighteously, and whose death was not to be embittered by the gnawings of remorse.

“ Alas ! alas ! ” spake the senior ; “ if we had but told our beads before we began our work this morning, we would have now nothing to charge ourselves with, when we shall shortly go before the judgment-seat of God.”

“ Alas ! alas ! ” interposed the second, “ why did we ever suffer human feeling to interfere with heavenly duties ! ”

“ It would, mayhap, have been far otherwise with us now,” observed the third, “ had we worshipped for a moment—only for a single moment,—ere we commenced to labour. But the Lord’s will be done ! ”

“ The Lord’s will be done ! ” solemnly ejaculated his companions ; “ the Lord’s will be done ! ”

These words were scarcely spoken, when the faint, quivering flame of that last lamp flashed up strongly and brightly for a moment, and in the next fell down into darkness,—extinct for ever.

In that hour of fear and danger, of dismay and death, words may not describe the horrors of their situation ; nor may the imagination conceive what they felt and suffered. But the awfulest moments will have at length an end ; and the most deadly human agony must at one time or other be over. It was so with them. They sat down in that thick darkness—the damp reek of the grave around them, below them, and above them—the odours of death loading every breath they breathed—the fangs of hunger already fastening on their vitals—hopeless, cheerless, lost ; and—they slept. For six good hours did they sleep as soundly as though they were in their own happy homes, sheltered by their ancient roofs, and surrounded by their friends, their beloved families, by all they held dear on the earth. How is it that the criminal sleeps the soundest during the night which precedes the morning of his execution ? How was it that these poor men, irretrievably condemned to, perhaps, the most terrific form of expiating the original sin which can be conceived, slumbered dreamless, soundly, calm, and undisturbed ? Psychologists and metaphysicians may determine it if they can ; it is not within the compass of an ordinary mortal’s powers to do so.

The sleepers were awakened, at the expiration of their usual time of resting, by a simultaneous feeling which operated on the

sensations of all three in the most remarkable manner. Opening their eyes on a sudden, they beheld a light—small, indeed, but still steady and strong—at the further extremity of the long gallery in which they were immured. They arose at once from the earth whereon they lay; and they gazed delighted on the welcome vision.

“God be praised!” spake the senior; “God be praised for ever! Behold, he has given us wherewith to see in this darkness!”

“Truly,” spake the second; “we slept only when our last lamp became extinct. Then was there no more light in the mine. Heaven be thanked; for the Lord is truly good to us!”

“But, my brothers,” interposed the third, “of what avail to us is light if we have not also food? It will but serve to aggravate our torments, to make our last agonies still greater; for it will only serve to shew us in what mode the parting pangs may be felt by each other, and thus make us each one die even a treble death.”

“God is good! God is good!” replied his companions, resignedly; “God is good! But, see! see! the light moves!”

“Yea, God is good!” repeated the third; “it comes hither—it nears this spot! Behold, it approaches!”

They awaited in fear and in trembling,—in a paroxysm of excited hope and anticipated dread,—as the mysterious light became every moment more and more distinct, and seemed to draw nearer and nearer to them with every elapsing second. At length it flashed out in all its intensity. Preternatural in its brightness and strength, it was evidently no earthly illumination. They now saw it clearly. It was emitted from an immense mine-lamp, borne by a gigantic figure, the upper part of whose form was lost in the darkness of the roof,—such was his extraordinary altitude. This appalling spectre was garbed in the long, flowing black robe of a monk; and his head, as far as the dim light in which it was seen rendered it visible, seemed enveloped in an ample cowl of the same material. In his right hand he bore the lamp, from whence this light proceeded; in his left he held a small basket, covered with a clean, white, linen cloth.

“God defend us!” ejaculated the horror-struck miners, when

they had fairly seen this formidable figure emerge from a deep cleft in the rock at the further end of the long gallery. "God be our guard ! it is Meister Hämmerling ! it is the monk !"

"Come he for good or come he for evil—come he for weal or come he for wo," said the senior of the three, "he comes not without the permission of Heaven. It boots not to us now what his object may be ; if it be a bad or a good one, God's will be done !"

"God's will be done !" again ejaculated his companions.

As this dialogue passed, the mine-spirit approached them : at its conclusion he stood before them, fully revealed to their view. Oh ! but it was an awful sight, to see that disembodied being ! The presence of the dead, under any aspect, must ever be fraught with fear to those who live. Even these poor men, buried as they were in reality—dead in anticipation—hopeless—lost, beyond the prospect of redemption—close neighbours of the lifeless and the departed—wanderers, as it were, on the verge of the other world—even they shuddered as they gazed, and shrunk within themselves as they scanned his preternatural proportions. In the sublime words of the prophet, "Fear came upon them and trembling, which made all their bones to shake. A spirit passed before their face, and the hair of their flesh stood up : it stood still, but they could not discern the form thereof : an image was before their eyes : there was silence : and they heard a voice."*

"You are punished for your neglect of the Lord," spake the spirit, in the deep, solemn tones of the sepulchre ; "you now dree the lot of those who prefer work to prayer—earth to heaven."

The hapless men groaned in spirit ; through fear, however, of the awful being who stood before them, they kept silence and said nothing in reply.

"You are punished," pursued their frightful visitant, "for your postponement of the Lord to your own convenience. But the Lord is a merciful Lord,—free to forgive even those who slight him,—and his mercy endureth for ever."

"Lord, have mercy on us !"

"Christ, have mercy on us !"

* Job iv. 14-16.

“ Lord, have mercy on us ! ”

Thus did these miserable miners, in their agony, recite their litany.

“ Here,” spake the spirit, after a long pause, in which he looked on them severely but sadly ; “ here, take ye these, and attend to the directions I give ye with them.”

He held forth the lamp, and the basket which he carried, even as he said the words, and then signed to the trembling wretches to take them. The eldest of the three stepped forward and took them in his hands.

“ In that basket you will find enough food,” continued the spirit ; “ from this lamp you may furnish yourselves with abundant light and oil.”

They could scarce repress their joy when they heard him speak thus ; and they were fain to give vent to their feelings in audible manifestations.

“ Be quick,” proceeded their benefactor, unheeding their exclamations of gratitude and delight. “ Take oil and a light from this lamp ; take the food you will find in this basket.”

It was soon done.

“ And now,” he added, solemnly, “ one word more, and my task is performed. Work your own way hence as well as you may : the Lord wills your ultimate deliverance from this place ; but he also wills that it be by the hard labour of your own hands. Oil, and light, and food will last ye till your long toil be completed. And,” he concluded, in a still more solemn strain, “ when the first ray of heaven’s light breaks in upon your present darkness, that moment it is permitted ye by Omnipotence to ask one favour each of God—to express one wish every man—and it will be granted ye. Farewell ! ”

The spirit melted into thin air ere the last echo of his parting injunctions had died in that dim vault ; and the poor buried men were only convinced that all which had passed was not a wild dream, by the cheering light shed from their renovated lamp, and by the presence of what seemed to them a sufficient supply of food for the next succeeding twelve hours.

“ God’s will be done ! ” they again exclaimed, with one harmonious accord ; “ his name be blessed for ever ! ”

To work they went cheerfully, and at once ; and they

laboured, without repining and without remission, on the formidable impediment which lay in the way of their deliverance.

There was "weeping and wailing" that night in three once happy homesteads of Rheinbreitbach. Bearded men wept like girls for the loss of their friends and brothers; children cried bitterly for their sires; and wives, fond, fair, and virtuous, mourned for the husbands of their hearts, the fathers of their children, the stay and support of their existence, and "would not be comforted, because they were not."

Thus slowly and sorrowfully seven long years sped over.

The buried miners wrought as men will do, when their aim is redemption from death. At length a faint external ray penetrated the gloom of their living grave through a narrow crack made in the intervenient mass of rock; it was first seen by the senior—ever the foremost of the three.

"God be praised for his mercies!" cried the man aloud. "Oh, my brothers, but He has been good to us! Behold!"

They looked and saw the first bright streak of daylight. It was indeed a joyful sight to see—a sight which none can appreciate save those who, like them, have been plunged in the darkness of the tomb from it.

"God be praised! He has indeed been good to us," ejaculated they all in the same breath.

Once more they knelt down, and once more prayed fervently to Him "who holds the earth in the hollow of his hand," pouring forth their thanks and their gratitude, like the blessed waters of a living fountain on a parched soil. Their souls were dissolved in peace and delight; ecstasy was theirs, and they knew what was happiness.

Then up and spake the senior of the three in this fashion. He seemed inspired as he spoke the words.

"Now that we have seen the day once more, I only wish to behold my wife and my children; to embrace them once again and to bless them, and then to die."

"Die!" echoed mournfully the mazes of the hollow vault.

“ And I ! ” pursued the second, taking up the wish as the mine-monk had directed ; “ I only desire to sit down to one meal with my family in peace and in thankfulness, and then to depart from this wicked world for ever.”

“ For ever ! ” again repeated the far-resounding echo.

The third then said, in a solemn tone—

“ A year and a day, to live with my wife and children, is all I ask of God, and then to pass away in peace.”

“ Peace ! ” echoed the vault, in exquisite dying cadences.

They had scarcely concluded this conversation, when the mass of rock which had fallen so as to bury them alive, split asunder with a loud crash, and left them free passage from the fatal mine.

Again they thanked the Lord, on emerging to earth once more, and again they prayed fervently for His further aid and protection. They then proceeded towards Rheinbreitbach.

It was evening when they reached the village : and the inhabitants were all enjoying themselves, after the labours of the day, in the bosoms of their respective families.

“ Adieu, my brothers,” spake the elder miner, as he stood before his own cottage door ; “ Adieu ! adieu ! if we never meet in this world more, mayhap we *may* meet in heaven.”

He entered his cottage. It seemed sadly changed to his thought in the short time that he deemed he had been absent. A miserable looking woman, crouching despairingly over the embers of an expiring wood fire, three full-grown boys huddled together in a dark corner of the room, shivering with the cold, were its inhabitants.

“ How is this ? ” he exclaimed, in surprise ; “ here is not mine own home ! Who be ye ? ”

The woman rose as he spoke, and, hesitating for a moment, slowly approached towards where he stood. She looked anxiously into his eyes, and she put forward her hands to remove the thick hair which hung in matted locks over his brow.

“ Oh, mother ! mother ! ” cried the boys, “ do not touch him ! do not touch him ! He is the wild man of the Seven Mountains—look at his beard ! ”

The miner smiled as they spoke ; but it was a smile of sadness. Their words, however, directed his attention for a moment to himself, and he looked up and down at his garb and surveyed his own general appearance. To his great amazement he saw that his beard reached far below his waist. He immediately concluded that the miraculous interposition of Providence in his behalf had been considerably greater than he was even yet aware of.

“ God’s will be done ! ” he gently ejaculated ; “ God’s will be done ! I am in his hands, and he has been most merciful to me.”

In the meanwhile the woman was engaged in examining his features, in scanning every visible lineament of his face, in scrutinizing every trait of his countenance. Her close attention attracted his notice.

“ Speak ! ” she cried, on a sudden ; “ let me hear your voice ! my soul misgives me ! Does the grave give up its dead, or is it only an evil spirit come to cheat me in my heavy sorrow and affliction ? Speak ! speak one word only ! For God’s sake, who suffered for us all, speak ! ”

“ My wife ! ” was all he answered ; “ My wife ! my wife ! ”

She was instantly locked in his warm embrace.

The single glance he bestowed on her sufficed to confirm his identity ; and though

“ Sharp misery had worn her to the bone,”

he knew her at once to be the former companion of his life, the long-lost sharer of his joys and his sorrows.

“ These are our children ? ” he asked of her, half doubtingly, half in dread, the first tumult of his joy over ; “ these are our children ? ”

The mother nodded an assenting gesture ; her heart was too full to reply otherwise to this strange interrogatory.

“ Nay ! nay ! ” he continued ; “ you deceive me. It cannot be ! it cannot be ! ”

“ Deceive you ! ” echoed the confounded creature. “ Deceive you ! Oh, no ! no ! no ! ”

A hysterical giggle accompanied the words. Her heart was overcome by happiness ; she knew not well how to bear it.

"I but left them last night," proceeded he; "and then they were only babes—mere babes: how is this?"

"Last night!" screamed his wife; "last night! It is seven long years this day since you went forth to that fearful mine; seven long and dreary years they have been to me! seven years of dool, and dread, and sorrow—of hopelessness and grief. Oh, God! oh, God!"

She wept bitterly for a while; she then became more composed.

"God's will be done!" spake her husband solemnly. "I see it all; I am ready!"

It was not difficult for him to divine that the period he and his companions in misfortune had only imagined to be a single night, was in reality of full seven years' continuance, nor to perceive that there had been a special miracle wrought for their deliverance. He remembered the injunctions of the spirit of the mine; and his own wish rose at once distinctly before his mind's eye with the recollection.

"The Lord's will be done," was all he said; "the Lord's will be done; I am ready."

He sat down, and in another moment he was a corpse.

He had beheld his wife, and he had beheld his children; he had embraced them with a dying man's embrace; and he had then calmly resigned himself to that power who had sustained him in his peril, in his time of tribulation and fear. He had passed, poor fellow! from this world of weariness and wo to one where peace is a perpetual denizen, where the presence of God makes all things bright and beautiful, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest."

Two funeral trains followed each other to the village churchyard of Rheinbreitbach, within four days from the date of the deliverance of the buried miners. They were those of the senior and the second of the three, on whom, in that time, the judgment of God had been fulfilled, in accordance with their own expressed desires before emerging from their living sepulchre. They were interred in one grave, amidst the sighs and tears of all the inhabitants of the neighbourhood.

A third tenant was added to the same tomb, exactly at the expiration of a twelvemonth and a day from that period. It was the third miner, who had lived for a year and a day with his wife and children as he wished to do, and had then passed away in peace, to join his departed friends in a more enduring world.

Tradition, legend, or history, says nothing further on this subject.

ST. APPOLLONARISBERG.

THE BARON AND THE ABBOT.

Within a short distance of Remagen, on the left bank of the Rhine, the ancient abbey of St. Appollonarisberg towers over the valley and the river, commanding, perhaps, one of the most beautiful views in all that land of loveliness. This foundation was formerly an appendant to the magnificent abbey of Siegburg, on the opposite bank of the river, below Bonn; but the salubrity of its situation, its vicinity to that great thoroughfare of Europe, the Rhine, the beauty of its site, the advantages of its position, and many other circumstances combined, caused it to be honoured more frequently by the presence of the lord abbot than the more important edifice from which he took his proud title. It is of one of those lords of the church, in the days when Christianity wandered in darkness, looking in vain for a guidance and a light, that the following jocose legend is related.

In a little straw-roofed hut, at the foot of the hill on which the abbey is situated, on the side facing the town of Remagen, lived the widow of a poor vine-dresser, long dead, and her only child, a young female of tender years. The mother was named Gertrude—the daughter, Sabina; and they led a peaceful life in innocence, and, according to their station, in honour; although they were very poor, and one of them, the latter, was very beautiful. Sabina was, in truth, the loveliest girl on the Rhine shore; a fact known to every one in her neighbourhood, strange to say, but

herself. Still she was very modest, and pious withal ; and though, as may well be imagined, she had many lovers, she gave encouragement to none, beyond what the strictest propriety dictated ; neither did she permit a freedom from any one of them, high or low, which could affect the clearest conscience, even at the hour of death. "From morn till noon, from noon to dewy eve," she worked beneath the roof of the humble abode which gave her birth, or in the cool shade of the linden trees which grew around it ; her mother the while cultivated their little garden, or looked carefully to the health of their small vineyard. Of all that "flattered, followed, sought, and sued" the fair Sabina, there was only one who found favour in her sight. He was the castellan of the Aarburg,—a young, honest, true-hearted, and noble vassal of his chief, and was in every respect worthy of her love. His name was Justin. It boots not to tell how they met, or under what circumstances they became acquainted ; when they plighted their troth, or what time his affection overcame the scruples of maidenhood, and the honest objections of Gertrude, who at first only saw in such a union the disparity of her daughter's condition. Suffice it to say, that the marriage was agreed on, and the day fixed ; and that Justin only waited his lord's return from the Upper Rhine, to celebrate it by his permission and in his presence, according to the terms of his feudal tenure. But the betrothed lovers were destined to feel the full force of the poetical proverb, and to experience it in all its bitterness:—

"The course of true love never did run smooth."

Adverse circumstances occurred to cloud their prospect of immediate felicity, and to darken altogether their view of the future.

At this period the Abbot of Siegburg dwelt in the abbey of Appollonarisberg, keeping up a degree of pomp, and state, and profligate extravagance in those sacred cloisters, altogether incompatible with the sacred functions he was appointed to fulfil. A gross sensualist, bloated in body, coarse in mind, living only for the luxuries and the enjoyments of the flesh, and altogether heedless of the spirit, it was not to be supposed that the fair Sabina's fame for beauty could long remain unknown to him ;

or that, once acquainted with her abode, he would fail to tempt her innocence and seek to destroy her virtue. It was so. One evening, as he rode across the plain towards the abbey, he saw her in her mother's little garden tending the teeming vines. He was immediately struck with her uncommon loveliness; and the desire to possess her person speedily took possession of his mind. Approaching the place where she stood, he put a few questions to her, for the purpose of eliciting her history, and the circumstances of her state: he then offered her gold as a keepsake: the modest maiden, however, answered his inquiries with brief replies, and his gold she refused to accept, gently but firmly resisting all his entreaties to take it. The libertinism of his looks, and the freedom of his address, brought the blush of shame more than once into her beautiful cheeks, and suffused her fair neck with the eloquent blood; she hastened, therefore, as soon as she could do so without disrespect to his clerical character, to conceal herself from his sight. From that hour the abbot determined to obtain her, by force or by fraud, by fair means or by foul, by cruelty or by cunning; from that hour she was never for an instant out of his mind, but formed a part of all he saw in idea, and all he felt in reality. Vainly, however, did he attempt the virtue of the maiden; to his pressing solicitations she would not yield; to his entreaties she only turned a deaf ear: she felt no fright at his threats; and she smiled at his senile raptures, his fulsome flatteries, his aged admiration. He was disconcerted in his every design on her chastity, defeated in every plan he formed against her honour. Vexation and disappointment made him peevish to all around him, and unendurable to himself. Months thus lapsed.

"What ails my lord abbot?" said his supple chamberlain to him one morning, on entering his luxurious apartment; "it is long since he looked as he was wont to do in days of yore. Nay, by the body of God, he grows lean as a young hound—thin as a whipping-post."

The abbot shook his head sorrowfully, but made no reply.

"—— It is of a truth," continued the fawning official, "that something sits uneasily on the mind of my lord. May not his

faithful servant be permitted to know it? If it be aught that human zeal can bring to pass, I am ready to try it for your sake. Speak, my lord abbot—speak!”

After some hesitation, and with much circumlocution, for he desired to deceive even himself, the abbot disclosed his secret. He was in love; as deeply in love as the grossness of his nature allowed;—he felt, as much as his sensuality would permit him to feel, the pangs of that noble passion.

“Oh! is that all?” said this unscrupulous agent of his pleasures—his oft-proved pander in times past; “just give me your permission to make the experiment, and I promise you that you shall soon have the girl.”

“You have it, you have it, to the full—to the full,” replied the abbot; shaking his head, however, incredulously.

The chamberlain left the abbey without delay, and hastened to the humble abode of the rustic beauty. She was dressing the flowers in her little garden, herself the fairest flower among them all.

“God give thee a blessing, my pretty maiden,” said he; “I greet thee in His name. These are lovely flowers in thy garden; but thou art a lovelier than any here. Ha! ha! ha!”

He laughed at this brilliant sally; but Sabina only coloured and looked down; busying herself with her task to hide her blushes.

“Fairest of fair maidens,” continued he, “my lord abbot loves dearly such sweet flowers as are to be found in this pretty garden. Bring to him a little basketful every morning to decorate his private chamber, his own particular oratory, and you shall be well rewarded with his gold, and with his blessing to boot. Nay, I am quite sure that each bud will be valued by him at as high a price as a diamond, if it be only plucked by those white, little hands.”

Sabina’s lovely countenance was for a moment lighted up with pride and indignation, as she answered:—

“No! not for the world would I do it. The best six horses in the stalls of my lord abbot should not bring me to his chamber, nor all the gold in his coffers purchase of me a single flower on any condition. They are not mine; they have been planted for Justin—they have been reared for him—they have

blown for him—and for him, and for none other, shall they ever be plucked. Besides, reverend sir, I am no flower-girl; and I don't sell flowers."

The chamberlain departed mortified at this rebuff, and quite dissatisfied with the result of his experiment. But he was not, however, to be defeated in his evil designs by the obstinate virtue of a peasant girl; neither was he to be deterred from prosecuting them by any feeling of shame, or scruple of conscience, at the infamous part he was about to perform.

"I have heard," he soliloquized, as he walked towards the abbey; "I have heard that her mother is rather godly given. Good! we'll try her on that tack. A capital thought! First win the silly old dame, then will assuredly follow the demure daughter. Who shall we send?—Ha! Father Anselm comes this way—he is just the man. A true wolf in sheep's clothing! he'll do it, I warrant me!"

The worthies soon encountered each other; and the subject of Sabina's seduction was at once mooted, and warmly discussed between them. The discussion terminated at the gates of the abbey, where the abbot, who had seen them from afar, waited impatiently to know the success of his emissary's abominable mission.

"Well," quoth the wicked churchman to his chamberlain, as they sat together in his private chamber, "how hast thou fared?"

"Ill, my lord, ill!" replied the minion; "ill, of myself I freely confess it. But the Father Anselm and I have devised a plan, which, through his astuteness and my active agency, will ensure success to another experiment, an ye try it."

"Call him in then," said the abbot.

The matter in hand was then discussed once more; and a second plan was there laid for the ruin of the innocent girl. Anselm soon departed on his unholy errand.

"Honour and reward shall be thine," said the abbot, as the door closed slowly on the sanctimonious villain; "honour and reward, if you make her mine. Go, and God speed thee."

They parted for a period.

“ Good day, my good sister,” spake the wily monk to Gertrude, as he entered the humble cottage, which the beauty and virtue of Sabina converted almost into a shrine and a paradise. “ Peace be unto you—*Pax vobis cum.*”

Gertrude hastened to place a seat for him, for she revered deeply all appertaining to the priesthood.

“ I am weary and wasted with toil and travel,” continued he ; “ give me a cup of fair water, for the sake of Him who died on the cross : He will reward you—I cannot.”

The good Gertrude hastened to her little cellar, to draw him a beaker of her best and oldest wine. He drank it off, and appeared refreshed. Sabina had in the meanwhile gone forth to gather some fresh fruits for him.

“ That is a lovely girl of yours,” said he to the mother ; “ she has a bright dowry in her surpassing beauty.”

Gertrude’s eye glistened at this eulogium on her dear daughter : the monk had touched the right chord ; the mother’s heart was at once won by this well-timed praise of her dear child.

“ But oh, my dear sister,” he proceeded, “ beauty is but a fatal gift after all, if it be not well used.”

The edified mother nodded her assent and approval of the hackneyed sentiment.

“ You should devote her to the service of the Virgin,” he sighed ; “ one so fair as she is cannot be at all fit for this wicked world. Alas ! alas !”

“ Holy father,” replied Gertrude, “ she is already betrothed ; she has been for some time engaged to a good and a brave young man, and she will soon become his wife.”

“ Woman, woman !” spake the monk, with an expression of virtuous severity on his countenance truly surprising to behold ; “ you will repent this alienation of such a servant from the worship of the holy Virgin.”

Poor Gertrude was confounded at the alteration in the manner of her guest, and she looked on him with a look in which amazement, and ignorance, and awe, were strangely blended together.

“ I tell thee,” he continued, “ that a curse will lie on thee and on thine, if she marries that man—if she marries any man—if she marries at all. Send her to a nunnery ; that is the right road to heaven.”

"But Justin?" — imploringly interposed the puzzled creature; her sense of justice struggling hard with her religious dread.

"Talk not to me of Justin," sharply replied the monk, "talk not to me of any man. Who is Justin, that he should be set up as between your daughter and her God? Nay, never thank me; I but do the mission of our Maker. Send her to a nunnery; and I know one, a lord of the church, who will make her an abbess ere she dwells there any very long time."

This put the finishing stroke to poor Gertrude's confusion; she had nothing further to say on the subject: but she certainly thought how much grander it would look for her daughter to be an abbess, commanding her nuns, than if she was only the wife of a simple castellain in the service of a nobleman. The wily monk perceived the effect he had produced, and spake no more on the subject. His work in that quarter was done. Sabina just then entered; and the traitor guest, after partaking of the further refreshment provided by her hospitable care, speedily departed for Appollonarisberg. Before he left the cottage, however, he contrived to speak in private once more with Gertrude; and, giving her a handsome present, he cautioned her how she told aught of the transaction to any one but the party concerned.

From that hour, the demon of ambition seemed to have taken full possession of this poor widow's soul; and she left no means untried to bring her daughter's heart under the same baneful influence. But all her efforts were vain; Sabina was true to her dear Justin; and nothing short of his own unworthiness could ever alienate her affections from him.

One day the mother and daughter held a conversation together on the subject of taking the veil; in the course of which Gertrude fully opened her mind to Sabina as to the causes which conduced to this wish on her part. The dialogue then proceeded. It was the first time she had ever explained her views on the matter; and Sabina was not slow in comprehending their entire bearing. Her suspicions of the monk were at their height, when her mother shewed her the rich present he had made her; and with the sagacity so common to her sex when their hearts are concerned, she at once connected this circumstance with the visits of the abbot himself on a former occasion. Without, however,

mentioning them to the unconscious agent of his vile purposes, she merely contented herself by saying—

“Mother, I am Justin’s bride—his betrothed bride, it is true—but still his bride in the eye of heaven; and I am therefore bound to conceal nothing from him which concerns my fate or his future happiness. He shall know of this.”

“Thanks! many, many thanks! my dear, dear Sabina!” cried Justin himself, embracing the beloved girl.

He had entered unperceived, and heard the noble sentiments of Sabina, and also some of the conversation which had preceded it, without mother or daughter being aware of his presence. The gentle girl at once communicated to him every thing that had passed; and likewise mentioned her own suspicions in connexion with it. Justin fully concurred in her views; he knew the monks but too well; and he believed them to be capable of every treachery and vice.

“Leave the villain to me,” said the excited lover; “I’ll deal with him according to his deserts—leave him to me.”

“Heaven defend us!” exclaimed Gertrude; “here he comes!”

The monk again made his appearance as the words were spoken. In another moment he was in the energetic gripe of the enraged Justin.

“What would you?—what would you?” shrieked the hypocrite, as he writhed in the clutch of the strong young man; “would you kill me?—would you murder me?—remember my sacred calling; I’m a priest—a priest!”

“I forget it only when you forget it yourself,” replied Justin; “’tis you who have unremembered it;” and he shook him as he spoke, as a large dog would do a brawling, quarrelsome cur. “I honour your calling, but I honour not you.”

“Pity me—have mercy—spare my life, spare my life—mercy, mercy!” whined the monk.

“What would you have here?” asked the lover. “I’ll trample the foul heart out of your breast, and fling your worthless carrion to feed the fishes in the Rhine, unless you tell me all.”

“I’ll tell you all—I’ll tell you all!” murmured the half-strangled villain; “but squeeze me not so hard,—I can scarcely breathe—ugh! ugh! ugh!”

Justin relaxed his hold, and the culprit at once made a full

confession. Gertrude was horrified at the disclosure ; and Sabina was highly delighted that she had escaped the snares of the wicked priest. The rage of the lover may not be related : he could scarce contain himself at first from inflicting summary punishment on the hypocritical seducer ; but, at length, yielding to the solicitations of his betrothed, he suffered him to depart unmolested and uninjured.

“ Go, villain !” he cried ; “ and tell thy accursed master he shall not escape my hands. I warn him by thee—go ! go ! ere I kill thee outright.”

The monk, too glad to get permission to depart, availed himself of it without a moment’s delay. He was soon out of sight of the indignant lover.

A consultation was then held in Gertrude’s cottage as to the best mode of protecting themselves for the future ; and the result of it was, that Justin undertook to disclose all the circumstances of the case to his lord, with a view to obtain his advice and assistance in this difficult emergency. He took leave of his beloved Sabina and her terrified mother accordingly, and forthwith proceeded to the Castle of Aarburg to put his project into execution.

Within less than a week from the date of this occurrence, the Abbot of Siegburg left the monastery of Appollonarisberg, and bent his way to the nearest watering-place for the benefit of the medicinal springs. He had pampered himself into indigestion, and he suffered all the horrors of that, the rich, and the idle, and the luxurious man’s deadliest curse. The road to his destination lay close by the castle in which dwelt Justin’s lord ; but as he was in friendship with the baron, he had no suspicion of any harm from thence. For a noble to side with his vassal against a prince of the church, on account of a poor peasant girl, was a thing never dreamed of by him, or even deemed within the compass of possibility. He was, however, mistaken for once in his calculations.

“ Now, lie ye down close in the greenwood and gorse, my merry men all, and nestle ye there together like field-mice till

I give the signal," cried the Lord of Aarburg. "You shall soon see some rare sport, I warrant me: a fat capon comes this way—I would catch him, mind, but not kill him,—so take ye good heed. And you, Justin, look out sharply—see that he escape not our toils: that would be too bad."

"Fear not for me, my noble master," replied Sabina's lover; "he shall deal with the devil an he does."

The vassals all laughed aloud at this sally of the castellain's; and so did his master too, for Justin was a general favourite.

This dialogue passed in the forest underwood which skirted the road to the baths, whither the Abbot of Siegburg was journeying; and the interlocutors and their auditors were an ambush party laid by the lord of the castle of Aarburg, which covered the summit of the hill above them, to avenge on that bloated ecclesiastic the injury he would fain have inflicted on his best beloved vassal.

"By the head of my sire," quoth the baron on a sudden, speaking to himself aloud; "but I shall make him rue the day he ever designed evil to yon young man and his fair maiden,—I shall, I shall."

The looks of his vassals shewed how much they sympathised with their lord, and how willing they were to second his efforts to that effect.

"He comes, he comes!" cried Justin, in breathless haste; "the proud priest and his pompous train are on the edge of the forest; now, my lord!—now, my friends!"

"To your posts all!—quick! quick!" cried their chief in a whisper; "let no word be uttered until the signal is given—off! off!"

The abbot entered the wood; the riotous mirth of his suite scared the birds from the boughs; his rollocking train made the forest ring with their laughter: he alone of the throng was silent and dejected.

"'Tis but a dull and a lonely place my masters, this," said he to them; "so prick on your steeds, that we may reach yonder plain ere the shadows of night fall on us."

"Tra-la-tra-la-tra-la-ra-la-ra," sounded the deep tones of a bugle in the solitude, making the stirred air quiver with its prolonged echoes.

"Surrender!" shouted a stalwart trooper, springing from the thicket, and seizing the rein of the lord abbot's ambling palfrey.

"Surrender!" shouted a hundred others, who made their appearance at the same moment; each man of them seizing the bridle of a horse in the train of the priest, and grasping the portly rider by the surcoat.

"We are betrayed!" was all the abbot could utter, for he was pulled from his horse, and his mouth and eyes were at once enveloped in a thick bandage, and he was then hurried along so rapidly up hill, that he lost breath and consciousness altogether. When he recovered, he found himself confined in a narrow room, with small grated windows set high up in the wall; an iron-bound wicket was the only means of entrance to it. It was a cheerless chamber in every sense of the word: a few boards raised above the level of the floor was the only accommodation it afforded; and these served for bed, chair, and table—in short, for every article of furniture. He paced the apartment like a chafed tiger—he shouted like a stentor for aid and deliverance—he whined like a whipped hound, when his strength was exhausted;—but still he found no assistance. He had not even the slightest consciousness that he was heard or noticed. Night speedily fell—his shouts became louder—his lamentations grew deeper;—but still he remained unheeded as before. At length, wearied with fatigue of body and anxiety of mind, he stretched his huge frame on the creaking planks, and slept long and soundly.

"Holla! holla!" shouted a rough voice in his ears; "up, up, from your lair; my lord baron comes to pay his respects to you this morning."

The speaker suited the action to the word, for he applied the end of a hunting spear to the fat sides of the sleeping priest with such hearty good will, that he sprang upon his legs like a young deer before the loosed hounds.

"Good morning t'ye, my Lord Abbot of Siegburg," said the Baron of Aarburg, who just then entered, accompanied by Justin; "good morning t'ye; I hope you have slept soundly. Nothing like a clear conscience, my lord—nothing like a clear conscience for priest or for layman—eh! Justin? But you are welcome

to my castle at all events, my lord, and right glad am I to have you as my guest on any terms."

The abbot knew not well what to say; but he blustered a great deal; talked big of the dishonour done to the church in his person; and urged strongly the vengeance sure to be inflicted on those who harmed him, here and hereafter, in this world and the next.

"Nay, never threaten me, my lord," resumed the baron; "never make a coil with yourself on that account; I hope I may not in my lifetime do a worse deed than waylay a wicked priest. But, joking apart, whither go ye in such state?—on what holy mission are you bound, my lord?"

"To the baths," replied the humbled abbot.

"For what purpose?" enquired the baron.

"To recover my lost appetite"——

"Heaven grant that no poor man may find it," laughed the baron; "it would be the ruin of him, my lord abbot."

"And now," said the abbot, "I shall descend to the refectory, for I hunger much, and would fain eat."

"Nay, my lord abbot, there go two words to that bargain—my will is requisite as well as yours before it take effect."

"But you'll not hinder me from leaving this wretched place?" imploringly asked the horrified priest; "you'll not starve me outright, will you?"

"I'll cure you of your indigestion, at least, my lord, before we part," answered the baron; "and I trust, too, of all other evils and lusts of the flesh which, I am sorry to say, so deeply afflict you. You remember Sabina, the poor widow's daughter, by Appollonarisberg, my lord?"

The abbot shrunk within himself at the mere mention of this name, and then cast down his guilty eyes to avoid the keen glance of the indignant nobleman.

"Good morning t'ye, my lord abbot," said the baron, leaving the room, before the astounded abbot had time to recover himself; "good morning.—You shall be duly attended to here. Adieu!"

"Good morning, hoary seducer of innocence, base destroyer of youth—glutton, drunkard, and forsworn priest," said Justin; "I am the fair Sabina's betrothed."

The door was slammed-to as they spoke, and the heavy bolt

was shot in the lock, ere the wretched abbot could summon courage to look up at his accusers. They had, however, left the apartment, and he was once more alone, a prisoner. In a corner near the entrance lay a small loaf of black bread, and a little brown pitcher of water. They had been left there by his captors, and were his only allowance.

As the day advanced, the bloated abbot began to experience sensations altogether new to him. He was, in short, hungry. But so utterly unacquainted was he with the nature of appetite that he wist not well what to deem the strange feeling. It, however, went on increasing hourly, till to such a degree did it at length attain, that he more than once glanced anxiously at the loaf and pitcher, and even now and then contemplated them benignly. Not conceiving it possible, however, that he should be kept on such food, he still averted his eye from the coarse, unsightly objects.

The day now drew near to a close ; he had tasted no food for at least four-and-twenty hours ; he became at last quite outrageous with hunger.

"Holloa! villains!" he shouted, in a voice which shook the vaulted roof of the chamber, accompanying his cries the while with a succession of most violent attacks on the door ; "holloa, there! holloa! holloa! do you mean to starve me alive? Here, bring me some dinner, and let it be of the best."

It was some time before his clamorous cry was attended to ; and faint and weary he sat himself down on his pallet to take a little rest and to breathe himself, for another attack on the door. At length, a gruff voice, on the outer side of the wicket, asked slowly,

"What would you, brawler, within there?"

"My dinner—quick! — of the best — and good wine!" frantically exclaimed the half-starved abbot.

"Softly! softly!" said the voice, in a tone like the breath of a hurricane ; "we have no food here but calves' flesh, and wine we know nothing about: but you have water enough in your pitcher to last till the morning, and we left you some black bread: look, and you'll find it. Good night."

Now if there was one description of animal food which this pampered priest hated more than another, it was calves' flesh. That was the reason it was offered to him on this occasion. The secret of this aversion had been extracted from his cook, who was made drunk for the purpose on the preceding night.

"Faugh! faugh!" exclaimed the abbot, his gorge rising at the bare mention of the meat: "I cannot eat that. Miserable slave! bring me something else."

"Well, then, good night until you can; there will be none made ready until this time to-morrow night again," said the voice.

The sound of receding footsteps were then heard; and the prisoner was once more left to the horrors of hunger and solitary captivity.

In vain he shouted—in vain he shrieked—in vain he assailed the door; his shouts were unheard—his shrieks were mocked by echo—and the door was proof to all the efforts he was enabled to direct against it. Utterly overcome with faintness and fatigue, he again seated himself on his hard couch, and again fell asleep.

The next morning brought with it a fresh visit from the lord of the castle, and Justin, his castellain. The abbot still slept as they entered; but the application of a spear-end to his ribs once more awoke him.

His visitors remarked, as they glanced around the apartment, that the pitcher had been emptied, and the loaf eaten, in the course of the night.

"Good morrow, my lord abbot!" said the baron; "how has your reverence spent the night?"

"I am starved!" grumbled the abbot from his midriff.

"I greet your lordship's reverence," spake Justin, with mock deference; "how fares your holiness?"

"Give me something to eat!" growled the famished churchman again.

"It gives me much pleasure, my lord abbot," observed the baron, "to find that you have, in some slight degree, recovered your appetite. Perhaps by the evening tide you may be found to eat calves' flesh. Good morning t'ye, my lord abbot; good morning!"

"Now! now! now!" cried the hungry ecclesiastic. Where is it?—where is it?"

"Good morning, my lord abbot," said Justin; "I greet you on the probability of your happy recovery."

They retired without heeding his solicitations. This time, however, they left him neither bread nor water.

The day drew to its close; evening set in; still the starving glutton could perceive no signs of dinner. He shouted, and smote the door once again, and the same rough voice, after due delay, was again heard without, and again answered him.

"Food! food!" cried the abbot; "I want food—I starve! Food, or I die! Food—food!"

"Will you eat calves' flesh?" asked the gruff interrogator, with a deep emphasis on the words; "calves' flesh!—calves' flesh!"

"Any thing! any thing!—or I eat my own flesh," shrieked the hungry ecclesiastic.

"Well, then, I'll go and ask my master will he give you some," said the voice.

It was heard no more; but in a short time the sound of many footsteps was audible in the passage. The door soon flew open, and the Baron of Aarburg, attended by Justin, and followed by a crowd of retainers, entered the cell.

"My lord abbot," asked the baron, "you would have food?"

"Yea, food! or I die!" replied the gasping priest.

"You were on your way to the baths to recover your appetite when you honoured me with this visit, my lord?—Is't not so?"

"I was," sullenly answered the abbot.

"And you have now found it?" inquired his tantalising interrogator.

"Food! food!" was the all-convincing reply.

"And pray, my lord abbot," continued the baron, "at how much did you estimate your expenses for the journey?"

"Six hundred ducats," whined the priest; "but give me to eat—or I die!"

"Well, then, acknowledge that I have cured you?" queried his ingenious tormentor.

"Ay, ay, you have. Give me meat," exclaimed the agonised victim.

"Well, then, here is food ; but you must pay the fee, which I have earned as your physician, to this young creature, ere you be permitted to taste a morsel of it."

The crowd opened as the baron spake, and Sabina stepped forward, bearing a large vessel of savoury food between her fair hands. The abbot was thunderstruck, as well he might be.

"Pay her the money you would have squandered at the baths, my lord abbot ; it must be done, ere you break bread. You have done her foul injury ; make her all the reparation in your power. It is but justice, my lord—it is but justice."

"It is but justice," exclaimed, as with one voice, the crowd of bearded men that stood around them.

The abbot winced a little under this singular prescription, and looked very serious on the subject.

"This is compulsion," he said ; "I shall not be compelled—I am a lord of the church—you shall be anathematised for it! I'll not give a denier for such a purpose—I'm no laic!"

"My lord abbot has not yet completely recovered his appetite," said the baron, turning to his followers ; "we had better leave him alone until he has. Sabina, you may take back your burden—the cure is not yet complete."

They made as though they would leave the apartment ; but the excitement of the moment had died in the mind of the hungry priest ; he remembered only his stomach, altogether forgetting his dignity ; and he imploringly recalled them.

"Stay, stay!" he cried ; "I'll pay her all—any thing—every thing—all you wish—but let me have wherewith to allay this craving hunger!"

Sabina again stepped forward, and, the abbot having handed over to her his well-lined purse, she placed the savoury dish gracefully before him : he swallowed its contents in a twinkling. That night he slept in a good bed, in one of the best chambers of the castle. Next morning he took his departure, muttering threats, but ever and anon laughing to himself at the joke which had been practised on him. Sabina and Justin were present.

"This fair creature thanks you, my lord abbot," said the baron, "for her marriage-portion."

“We shall no doubt enjoy it the more,” observed Justin, “by the remembrance of my lord abbot’s happy restoration to his appetite.”

“It was compulsion—all compulsion!” quoth the priest; “I’ll take the case to the diet—I’ll write to the emperor about it. I will! I will!”

“And I, my lord abbot,” said the baron, with much severity of manner, “and I, if you stir one step in the matter, shall write to the pope, and take the case to the court of Rome. Do as you list, my lord abbot.”

The humbled ecclesiastic and his crest-fallen train returned to Appollonarisberg the same evening; and from thence, the next day, they departed for Siegburg. The baron never heard of any further proceedings on the part of the priest. The fair Sabina and her fond husband, Justin, together with their mother, Gertrude, lived thenceforward in the Castle of Aarburg, loving and beloved, honoured by their lord, and almost worshipped by his servants.

It was said that the hypocritical Anselm broke his neck over the cellar stairs, and that the pander-chamberlain was suffocated in a butt of Liebfrauenmilch.

St. Appollonarisberg derives its name from a pious man bearing the same appellation, whose head—an invaluable relic in the estimation of the faithful—is there deposited, according to the best authorities on those subjects. This edifice, in times past, was the resort of thousands of pilgrims from the surrounding country, who came to pray for the intercession of the saint; and even to this day it is frequented for that purpose by many. But since the period of the first French Revolution there has been a considerable falling off in their numbers; and for a hundred that then sought its reliquary, there is now not more than one visitor with a similar object at its gates.

A droll story is told of an artist employed to paint the interior of the monastery, and of a rather incredible nature too; but it is so singularly illustrative of the beauty of the surrounding scenery, as well as of the enthusiasm of the German character, that it may not, with justice, be omitted here. This artist, whose

name is not preserved, became, says the tale, so enamoured with the surpassing loveliness of the view from the windows of the monastery, that he painted his own portrait high up on the outside of the walls, looking over the river, to the end that he might still seem to see for ever that most magnificent prospect of hill and dale, and wood and water, unparalleled, to his thinking, in the entire compass of the world.

The church of the monastery of St. Appollonarisberg is an elegant Gothic structure, the basement of which dates its construction from the eleventh century. The superstructure, however, is of a later era, and so likewise is the conventual edifice attached to it.

REMAGEN.

We now re-cross to the left bank of the Rhine, and take up the next point of interest on that noble river. That point is Remagen, or Rheinmagen, the Rigomagus of the Romans mentioned in the Antonine Itinerary. Remagen is certainly one of the oldest towns on this river. In the construction of a high road on its left shore, by the Elector, Charles Theodore of Treves, in the year 1768, several monuments, indicative of the abode of the Romans there at an early period, were dug up by those employed in its excavation. Among them there was one—a milestone, in a state of perfect preservation—once set up on the high road which then ran from Mainz to Cologne, over the very same spot, by the emperors Marcus Aurelius and Claudius Verus,* under whose auspices that great public work had been constructed.

The modern road was rendered absolutely necessary,—the old one having gone to ruin in the lapse of ages,—by the dangerous condition of the vicinity at the time of its construction. “Before that period,” says Schreiber, “the traveller ran numerous risks of losing his life while travelling this road, which was quite impassable when the Rhine had attained a certain height. Robbers often concealed themselves in the brambles

* A.D. 180–192.

and clefts of rocks, and thence rushed out on passengers, whom they threw into the river after robbing them." The present noble highway was finished by the French in 1801, while they held possession of that shore of the Rhine and the adjacent country.

The tradition which follows is current in the neighbourhood. It may well be termed a tale of

TRUTH AND TREASON.

When the episcopal throne of Cologne was vacated by the death of Conrad von Hochstetten, Engelbert the Second, his nephew, succeeded to it under the most favourable auspices. The history of the popular feuds which existed at this era has been already narrated,* so that it is only necessary to state here that Conrad had been long at open enmity with the burghers of that opulent and important city, and that his death was therefore hailed by them as a general blessing. At the time of his succession, Engelbert was provost of the collegiate church of St. Gereon, in Cologne. He then bore a high character for humanity and goodness, and was a great favourite with the burghers, as well as with the patricians or equestrian nobility, the two parts into which the council of the city was then divided. It has been seen how much he subsequently belied that character.

"God is my witness," would he say in confidence to the former, "God is my witness that I see with much sorrow the attempts at encroachment on your rights and privileges made daily by my poor, dear uncle. Would to Heaven that I had but the power, as I have the entire will, to put an end to them."

And to the proud patricians he was wont to boast of his noble origin, which was in truth princely, if heraldic records might be credited; and to speak in terms of depreciation of their opponents, the men in trade, the shopkeepers, the manufacturers, the merchants, and the mass of the citizens. But this was all done in private; for the citizens had long had the upper hand, and perhaps would have succeeded in effectually barring his succession, if they had known his real sentiments, which these, as it afterwards turned out, undoubtedly were.

* Vide Cologne, "The Rath Haus," page 71, &c.

At the period of his accession to the archiepiscopal throne of Cologne, and for some time previously, the state prisons of the diocess were crowded with burghers unexpectedly arrested by order of the deceased prelate Conrad, for resistance to his designs on the liberties of their native city, or taken, mayhap, in some of the many popular outbreaks which occurred during his administration of that spiritual principality. The sentiments of the new archbishop being supposed to be known to all parties, his assumption of the throne was hailed with feelings of joy and hope by those poor captives, and by their friends and relatives; for they very naturally inferred that he who was so liberal in his political views as a simple priest, would be equally so as a dignified prelate of the church; and they thus fondly anticipated an immediate release from their captivity and an amnesty for the past, as one of the first gracious acts of his sovereign power. But this hope was only an idle vision, as will be seen in the sequel. They had calculated wrongly; because they had founded their calculations upon those most erroneous, because most erratic of all data, the operations of the human mind; and because they had entertained, even for a single moment, the belief that a political priest would prefer the claims of justice to the dictates of selfishness or expediency.

Engelbert was crowned elector at Cologne, and there installed in the archbishopric of that noble diocess, amidst the acclamations of the whole population. His first proceeding was to make a circuit of his dominions, in order to ascertain the state of popular opinion, and the means it possessed of making itself felt or feared by him. At Bonn, the favourite abode of the archbishops of Cologne, he was entertained with all the honours usually accorded to his station by the burghers and nobility; there too he received their allegiance, together with the customary surrender of their feofs or military tenures, the latter of which, according to established usage, he immediately returned them. From Bonn he proceeded to Ahr.

At this period eight worthy gentlemen, burghers of Cologne, had long pined in the dungeons of the castle of Ahr, and the time was thought a good time by their friends and relations to intercede with the archbishop for their release. Whereupon three gentlemen, of their nearest connexions, undertook, of their

own accord, to ride over from that city to this prelate, where he abode at Ahr, to beg at his hands the liberty of their friends and relatives. The names of these gentlemen were Herr Rutger Overstolz, Herr Daniel Jude, and Herr Kostin von Aducht, all three being of the oldest and noblest families in Cologne.*

They reached Ahr in due time; but, alas! instead of obtaining what they sought, they were themselves made prisoners too, by order of the false archbishop, and then cast also into the same dungeon with those whom they came to beg free from that bitter bondage. It would be vain for them to remonstrate with their captors—treachery never yet acknowledged the rules of reason and of right; still vainer would it have been for them to offer aught of resistance, for their oppressors were an army, and they were only three. Into that dark dungeon, then, they were rudely thrust; and there they were told to keep company with their friends in their great misery.

“God help us,” quoth good Gerhard Overstolz, one of the older prisoners; “alas! our troubles seem but to increase rather than to diminish. We were but eight yesterday; we are now eleven. Capital work we’ll make for the headsman, I ween!”

“Heaven be praised!” then up and spake Herr Daniel Jude, a godly as well as a humane and a brave gentleman; “Heaven be praised! our fate will, at least, have one good result: it will serve as a warning to all others not to put their faith in priests more than they may in princes.”

“It is idle to be faint-hearted,” interposed on this Herr Kostin von Aducht, a worthy and a valiant gentleman likewise; “if God so wills it, we shall be free; if not, it is only our lot. Sorrow boots not; so let us even make ourselves content—and merry, too, if we can. After a storm comes a calm; and if it be the calm of the grave, why ’tis better even so, than to be for ever in such turmoil and tumult as we have passed through.”

The other prisoners only answered with a sigh and a shrug of the shoulder; but still they strove manfully to dissipate their anxiety as well as they might, in the period which intervened

* The Overstolz family is one of the most ancient in Cologne, or perhaps in Europe. It claims descent from a Roman patrician, one of the original colonists of the city.

before their anticipated execution. However, the God in whom they had their hope did not desert them in their hour of need. They were accorded an almost miraculous deliverance from their enemies. This is how it happened.

While they lay thus, rotting in that dark and dreary den, one of their number, Herr Gottschalk Overstolz, a brother of the two other gentlemen of the same name, succeeded in taming a little mouse to such a degree, that it was accustomed to creep forth from its little hole every morning and gather the crumbs which fell from their scanty allowance of bread. It was a great beguilement to the tedium of their long captivity. Oh! what delight it was to these poor prisoners to wile away the weary hours with the antics and gambols of this tiny animal, their only friend in that sorrowful captivity: none but those who have languished in "durance vile" until the "iron has entered the soul" can form any idea of their gratification. One day, however, the little animal altogether disappeared, and never afterwards came near them. Their sorrow for his loss was inconceivable. It is only the mind that has borne up against the greatest difficulty and danger that may be shaken and overcome by such a circumstance.

"I must have my mouse, come what will," said Herr Gottschalk Overstolz; "ay, an' I undermine the castle with my finger nails, I shall have him!"

"The sweet, dear, little animal, gone!" was the exclamation of his greatly pained companions.

It was singular to see the intense interest which these brave, honourable, pious, and excellent gentlemen, took in this trifling circumstance; but even captivity itself may be made captive; and misfortune is a most merciless leveller of all artificial distinctions in feeling.

The hand of Providence, as it turned out, was visible in this affair. It so happened, that as Herr Gottschalk Overstolz dug up the earth even with his nails, to come at that little mouse, he found what was of far more importance to them in their sad situation—a small file, a rusty chisel, and a large nail,—left there no doubt by accident in laying the foundations of the castle.

"God be thanked for this mercy!" was the exclamation of

all the prisoners, as these little instruments turned up one after the other ; “ God has heard us ! we shall yet be free ! ”

“ An we tarry here longer,” spake Herr Daniel Jude, “ we shall surely die of hunger.”

“ Yea, if the headsman have us not ere then,” observed Herr Kostin von Aducht.

“ So let us even to work at once on the bars of yonder window,” pursued Herr Rutger Overstolz ; “ to work ! to work ! ”

All that day, and until the middle of the night, they sedulously wrought at the stanchions of the windows. By the hour of twelve they had entirely cut through the thick iron bars which guarded it, and had also removed the wooden frame-work in which they were fixed, by means of their chisel. They then cut up their sheets and blankets into narrow strips ; these they manufactured into a rude kind of rope, to facilitate their descent from the ramparts of the castle. Their woollen caps they converted into a sort of socks to draw over their shoes, that they might not slip on the frozen snow ; for it was mid-winter, and the ground was covered with smooth ice. The leader of the party was next chosen by lot ; the lot fell upon Herr Gottschalk Overstolz — he who had found the instruments by which their progress in escape had been thus far effected. Emerging from the gloom of their dungeon, one by one, slowly and in silence, they crept on to the roof of the castle chapel, which was close by the window of their prison, and then entered its sacred precincts. There they offered up a fervent prayer to that God who had so far freed them from the hands of their deadly foe. From thence they ascended to the ramparts of the outer court-yard, and, ultimately succeeded, by the aid of their ropes, in reaching, unobserved, the outside of the castle walls. In another half hour they were in the wood, which then, as now, skirted and stretched wide around the fortress, hurrying along as rapidly as their half-sawn chains and heavy dangling irons permitted them. In the centre of the wood they called a halt, and there consulted together as to the course they should next pursue. The opinions advanced were various ; but not one of them was of the least agreement with the other. At length, Herr von Schurge outspoke boldly thus : —

"God delivered the holy three kings,"* said he, "from the dangers to which they were exposed by the power of the cruel Herod; let us then divide ourselves into three parties, in humble imitation of them, and He will, mayhap, be as merciful to us too."

"Be it so," was the unanimous answer.

On which, without an instant's delay, they divided themselves into three parties, one taking the by-road to Sinzig, and another the path to Tomberg.

It is of the adventures of the third party that this tradition treats. The names of the hapless gentlemen who composed it were Herr Gerhard Overstolz, Herr Daniel Jude, Herr Peter Jude, his brother, and Herr Kostin von Aducht.

Through bush and through briar, over moss, and moor, and meadow, they sped onwards without rest or refreshment, until the dawning of the morning. By that time they had reached the village of Bodendorf.

"God be thanked once more!" exclaimed Herr Gerhard Overstolz; "His hand hath guided us to a sure haven. This is a monastery to which I and mine have ever been of the best of benefactors; surely we shall be sheltered here in this our time of tribulation."

As he spake, they entered the court-yard of the building. They were met on the threshold of the edifice by an aged monk with a long gray beard. Few words sufficed to tell their tale, and claim hospitality of the fathers; in fewer still their claim was granted.

"Ye are welcome! thrice welcome!" said Brother Herrman, for so was the good old monk named; "happy in truth are we to succour the distressed in any shape, but still happier in that of a benefactor and his friends. Come in, come in! enter, enter!"

They followed the good old monk into the refectory, and were there introduced to the brotherhood. When they had made a hasty meal of the best fare the monastery afforded, their

* It will be borne in mind that the interlocutors are of Cologne, where the "Three Kings" received in those days, and even still receive in these, reverence, honour, glory, and worship, from the populace.

hospitable old friend, the good Herrman, bade them once more follow him. They accordingly did so.

“ Here is our dormitory,” said he, as they entered that portion of the building ; “ ye need rest, or I know not human wants; take it. Ye shall be undisturbed through the day, for I shall place trusty scouts on the watch in all quarters. At night we shall consult together as to the best means of ensuring your permanent safety.”

They thanked him with a fervour which may be more easily imagined than expressed, and at once availed themselves of his kind offer. Need it be said that these wearied gentlemen slept soundly? The sleep of innocence is always sound; and they had not pressed a bed for many months before. The old monk bestowed on them his blessing ere he retired, first giving them the means of freeing themselves from the remnants of their fetters.

It was not until late in the evening that they were aroused from the deep sleep into which they had fallen, by their active and benevolent friend, Brother Herrman. He brought them a small cask of Honnef wine, wherewith to make themselves merry, and plenty of good and wholesome food to feast themselves withal. That night was spent in unalloyed happiness. The next morning was fixed for their departure. They were engaged in preparations for the coming day, when the old monk once more entered; he rushed in among them like one possessed.

“ This way ! this way ! worthy gentlemen !” he exclaimed ; “ this way ! this way ! Ye are tracked — the bloodhounds are without yon gate ! — this way ! this way !”

He led them through a long, dark passage ; at the end of it he put aside a wicker-work partition, and they entered the large barn of the monastery. From thence they passed by another aperture in the opposite wall, into the hut of the poor hind, who did the field-labour and out-door drudgery for the monks.

“ Now, my brothers,” spake the good old man, pointing to a large cheese-press ; “ ye must even enter there, and double yourselves up as well as ye may, until your enemies be gone. God preserve ye from their hands !”

With these words he left them, and returned to the monas-

tery. They did as he had directed them, and secreted themselves in the cheese-press as completely as they could.

When the old monk went forth from the interior of the monastery into the court-yard, which lay before it, he was at once surrounded by the soldiers of the Archbishop of Cologne, and challenged with concealing the fugitives of whom they were in search. But he said naught to them in reply; and he would give them neither answer nor satisfaction. They proceeded to ransack the monastery, on this refusal to communicate with them. As they passed through the dormitory, they saw the chains which had been stricken off the legs of their victims, left there in their hasty retreat, which, besides confirming their suspicions, or rather making them certainty, redoubled also their zeal and activity to retake them.

"Sir monk," said the leader of the party, "your silence will not avail you now—here be the proofs!"

He held up the irons as he spake. They were such undeniable evidence of the fact, that the good old monk thought longer equivocation would be useless. His only hope now was to avert the danger which threatened these persecuted gentlemen, so as to give them time to get off in safety.

"It is true, most excellent sir," he said, "that they have been here; but it is also as true that they are not here now. They barely gave themselves time to take a mouthful of food, and to knock off their gyves, when they sped hence at once on their weary way—God knows whither, for they never told us!"

But their pursuers were not to be baffled so easily, nor was their thirst for blood to be so soon appeased; every corner of the convent was rummaged by them, notwithstanding the energetic protestations of the old monk; and every adjacent building was entered, to the great terror of the half-awakened inhabitants, and the great indignation of the pious brotherhood. At length they entered the hovel where the fugitives were actually concealed. It was an awful moment for these poor gentlemen; but the providence which had afforded them the means of escape, preserved them also in that hour of peril, and bore them bravely through the danger. After a most rigorous search, the soldiers at length desisted in despair. It had never once entered

into their heads, that the cheese-press on which they sate to rest themselves contained the objects of their investigation, so small was it in reality, and so absolutely incapable did it appear to hold one man, still less many of them. After resting a few moments, they rose and left the hovel.

“ Now, my friends,” said the excellent Herrman, as soon as he had ascertained the departure of the troops ; “ ye may come forth ! ye are safe for the present ! ”

They stole forth from their narrow hiding-place at once. The three Israelitish youths in the fiery furnace could not have suffered much more from heat than did these worthy gentlemen, pent up as they had been for more than an hour in that scant space. The reek that arose from the press, and filled the room as they left it, was like the steam of a seething cauldron ; and their clothes were completely saturated with perspiration.

“ And now, gentlemen,” said the monk, “ ye may not bide here with safety any longer ; so hie ye hence, and take ye the road to Remagen ; your enemies have gone on towards Bonn. On the other side of the Rhine alone are ye out of the reach of danger.”

With grateful hearts they took leave of their friendly entertainers, and wended their way towards the destination pointed out by their ancient friend, the good-hearted monk.

It was evening ere they reached Remagen—the eve of the Holy Virgin’s day—the eve of the feast of the Annunciation ; and weary, foot-sore, fatigued, and hungry, did they feel, as they entered a humble Gast-haus to crave shelter and refreshment for the night. Their ill-fortune, however, seemed not entirely to have forsaken them : for even as they despatched the cheerless meal of bread and water, which their piety had imposed on them in observance of the usual fast and vigil of the Roman Catholic Church on that day, a man of the neighbourhood, to whom they were all known, entered, and hailed them familiarly by their respective appellations.

“ Herr Gerhard Overstolz,” said he to that noble gentleman, as the spokesman of the party ; “ fear nothing from me, for you have naught to fear. I know your condition—I pity your misfortune—I wish to befriend ye. I do, indeed ! ”

“For the which, God will assuredly requite you,” observed Herr Daniel Jude. “That God who watcheth over the life even of the humblest sparrow on the house-top will reward you—we cannot.”

“Reward I wish not, and expect not,” replied the stranger energetically; “I have a heart, I hope!” As he spake, he laid his hand solemnly on his bosom. “And may the Lord do so to me, and more, if I injure a hair of your heads.”

“Heaven be thanked!” exclaimed these worthy gentlemen; “Heaven be thanked! who hath sent us such a friend in this our sore extremity.”

“And now, good gentlemen,” spake the seeming open-hearted stranger; “bide ye here a bit—bide ye here but till my return, and ye shall then be put in a place of security. I go to prepare it for your coming.”

He departed; and the fugitives blessed Heaven for this manifest interposition in their favour.

Instead, however, of seeking a friendly shelter for these hapless gentlemen, the treacherous villain went straight to the abode of the burgermeister of the town, and demanded an immediate audience.

“Sir Burgermeister,” quoth he, “I have an offer to make to ye. List! advance to me thirty marks of silver now, and I shall place in your hands a pledge which will bring ye full three hundred!”

“Good!” replied the burgermeister; “it is a bargain! But bring it hither, that I may see it; for I must first judge of its value before I lay my money down. I would fain know what it may be?”

Thereupon the traitor told him all that had passed; he told him how these four gentlemen had fled from the wrath of the archbishop, which still tracked them like a slot-hound;—how a large reward had been proposed to be paid to the captor;—how he had recognised them in the wretched Gast-haus, where they that night sought shelter and refreshment;—and how he meant to dispose of them to him for the sum he had named; because he had not himself the means of making them prisoners, and of thereby obtaining the entire reward offered by the vindictive prelate, their persecutor.

“ Bring them hither, by all means,” said the burgermeister ;
“ lose not a moment’s time. You shall be paid your price on
their safe delivery.”

The traitor returned in all haste to his innocent, unsuspecting
victims. They were at prayer as he entered, and their prayer
was to God, to the Virgin, and to her Saviour Son. It was an
antique rhyme, recited in form of a chant, and ran thus :—

“ Oh God in heaven ! who day and night
Watcheth with care o’er all below ;
Let’s walk within thy blessed light—
From thy pure paths let’s never go !
Take, take us to thy hely heed,
For we are now in deathful need !

And thou too, Mary—maid and mother—
Thou who hast given to earth its God !
Be in this hour to us no other
Than thou hast been to all who’ve trod
The rugged road of pain and danger !
Friend to the sick ! the sore ! the stranger !

On this thy festal-eve look down,
And stir thy sweet Son’s soul to pity !
Bid him his many mercies crown,
And grant the prayer of our poor ditty !
Bid him to save !— He’ll not refuse—
For, asked by thee, he cannot choose !”

The traitor joined in seeming earnestness and devotion with
the helpless supplicants ; but his heart burned with eagerness
and impatience to deliver them up to their enemies for the filthy
price of his treason.

“ Now, gentlemen,” he spake, when the prayer was ended,
“ follow me. All is ready—gently !”

Like lambs to the slaughter, these innocent men unhesi-
tatingly followed their betrayer. In a few minutes they reached
the abode of the burgermeister. At the inner door that func-
tionary waited to receive them.

“ Here is the pledge you wet of,” said the traitor to him ;
“ are you satisfied ?”

“ Here is thy reward,” spake he to the traitor, giving him the
sum agreed on, and waving him off with his hand ; “ go thy ways.”

The burgermeister then turned to the astonished gentlemen,

ruin very little now exists to indicate what it was in past times; but still its scattered remains distinctly prove that, at one period, it must have been a stronghold of no inconsiderable importance. The history of this place is enveloped in the darkness of the unrecorded past: and of those who lived, and breathed, and had their being within its walls, nothing more than a name, an empty name, is now known to posterity. Indefatigable tradition has, however, been busy with her recollections; and the subsequent legend of one of the lords of that rock still flourishes—to survive, perhaps, when all traces even of the massive masonry which still covers it shall have crumbled into dust and ashes.

A RASH OATH.

In the early part of the eleventh century, the barons of Renneberg, lords of Okkenfels, were famous, all along the shores of the Lower Rhine, for their wealth, and power, and large possessions; and their stately castle was the centre and focus of most of the coarse enjoyments of the rude nobility of that period. It is of one of the most ancient of that departed race that the subsequent legend is related.

The name of this noble was Reinhard von Renneberg; and he had for family an only daughter. He was a man of rough manners, and of most uncouth exterior; his soul, too, was as rugged as his body; and it was a wonder to all who knew him, how he could ever be the sire of so fair and so gentle a maid as was the lovely Etelina. She was his sole child, his first and his last; for her gentle-tempered mother had died in giving her birth, commending her with her last breath to the care of her husband, and he had never after wedded another.

Time fled, years lapsed over unnoticed, and Etelina, under the care of the venerable and pious chaplain of the castle, became a beautiful woman, and as good too as she was beautiful. She was beloved by all who approached her; but by none more than by the young knight Rudolf, of Linz, one of her powerful sire's most trusty retainers. About this time the old baron, her father, was obliged to join the army of the Emperor of Germany at Spire, on the Upper Rhine, with his contingent of troops, preparatory to a campaign about to be undertaken in Italy. In his absence, he confided his daughter to the guardianship of the

aged chaplain; the care of his castle and estates he consigned to the young Rudolph. Two tender hearts, placed in such close communion, were not slow of catching the spark of love; and opportunities were seldom wanting to fan the flame into an intense fire. Such, indeed, was the case. Before three short months had passed over them, Rudolph and Etelina were betrothed.

At the expiration of a year, a hasty courier reached the castle of Okkenfels, with the alarming tidings that the baron was on his way thither from Suabia, and that he brought along with him in his train a rich and noble bridegroom for his daughter. The lovers were astounded. Alas! Etelina knew but too well the severity of her sire's temper, and the unrelenting nature of his disposition. Rudolph was anxious and uneasy; his spirit, however, rose with the close proximity of danger. But how was he to resist the power of his feudal superior? — how could he even evade it? Whither to fly, that the vengeance of the baron might not reach him, he knew not; and opposition to the will of his lord would be worse than madness. In this emergency they had recourse to their friend, the ancient chaplain.

“My children,” spake the kind old man, “whoso God hath joined, man may not put asunder. Ye were made for each other. I shall marry ye at once, and then I shall advise with ye how to escape this impending danger.”

They were united, accordingly, in the castle chapel, at the solemn hour of midnight. The holy man, at the conclusion of the sacred ceremony, conducted them to a place of concealment. It was a deep, half-demolished dungeon, or, more correctly speaking, cavern in the rock on which the castle stands, to which a ruinous subterraneous passage led from the lowermost vaults of the building; a place that had been for ages unused, and which was only known to the old priest by mere accident.

“Rest ye here in peace, my children,” he said; “here is withal to support ye till my return. I will not tarry beyond the time that I can see you again in safety—Adieu!”

So saying, he deposited a basket of bread and wine, a lamp, a small pitcher of oil, and a few other necessities, in a recess beside the bundle of fresh straw which was destined to serve them as their only, inauspicious, bridal bed, and then left the

cave, first bestowing on them his blessing. The night was passed by the young couple in that lonely dungeon as pleasantly as if it had been spent in the purple chamber of an imperial palace. Such is love!

Early next morning a shrill bugle note announced the arrival of the baron; the sound penetrated even to the depths of their abode, and told them clearly of his coming. He came, attended by a long train of followers, and accompanied by the noble knight whom he designed to mate with his fair daughter.

"Where is my child?" were the first words he uttered, as he glanced around the obsequious crowd which awaited his approach in the court-yard of the castle, and saw her not among those who were gathered there to welcome him. "Where is my daughter? where is my Etelina?"

"Rest ye first, my lord," replied the aged chaplain; "rest ye first; refresh this noble knight and yourself, after your long and toilsome journey, then you shall know. She lies abed ailing this some time past, and may not be allowed to move from her apartment. But you shall see her anon."

Ill-satisfied with this excuse—for though rude in bearing, he felt all the affection of a father—but wholly unsuspecting, the baron entered the banqueting hall, and performed the due honours to his bidden guest. The banquet over, he sought his daughter's bower. She was, however, nowhere to be found. Wild with rage, he then rushed into the aged chaplain's chamber.

"Hoary villain!" exclaimed he, "where is my child? give me back my daughter!"

It was in vain that the poor priest attempted to appease him—it was in vain that he besought him to be at peace, even for a moment—to listen to reason—to calm his passion—nothing would soothe his rage—nothing might alleviate his anger—nothing could assuage his ire. It was only when the chaplain professed to know all about the fair Etelina's flight, but declined to disclose it, until he saw him in a fitting mood to receive the communication, that he affected a calmness which he felt not, and proposed to listen in patience to the old man's tale. Deceived by this appearance of quietude, the aged priest told him all he knew, with the exception of the fugitive lovers' place of concealment; that portion of it he reserved to himself, as a

secret, until he saw what effect his other revelations produced. It was a wise precaution as it turned out. The fiery baron had scarce sufficient patience to hear him through his story; when it was over, his rage burst forth afresh with tenfold fury. The old priest was cast at once, by his command, into the lowest dungeon of the castle, to which there was only access by means of an iron trap-door and a rope. His turn, however, came now. Notwithstanding all the entreaties of the baron, and all his threats to boot, the aged man would never reveal the secret of the lover's hiding-place. For this obstinacy, though aged, infirm, and shielded as he should be by the sanctity of his holy profession, he was hurried to the castle dungeon, the fierce baron swearing by his God the while, as he flung down the massive covering of the dreary vault,—

“If I forgive my daughter, or any one who has had hand, act, or part in her disobedience and flight, may I die a sudden death on the spot where I now stand, and may my soul dwell for ever with the damned in the lowest depths of hell!”

With this dreadful imprecation on his lips he departed, leaving the poor old priest to linger out life in a state worse than death—the living tenant of a tomb.

The castle of Okkenfels was but a dull abode for the disappointed bridegroom, when these circumstances became known to him, so he even packed up his effects and departed for his own home shortly afterwards. A complete purgatory it soon turned out to the vassals of the baron; for the temper of the old man, always fierce, grew now altogether unbearable; and no man abode within the sphere of its immediate influence, who could find a valid excuse for his absence. He had never been loved by his domestics and retainers—he was now hated most cordially by them; and many a time did the expression of regret for the absence of his fair daughter ascend to heaven, coupled with a prayer for her happiness and prosperity, and an imprecation on his head. Thus did the time speed heavily over, bringing but regret to all parties.

In the meanwhile, the fair Etelina and her husband had succeeded in leaving the castle precincts unperceived, and finding a

refuge in the forests which then skirted the base of the Seven Mountains. For nearly a year did they reside in this solitude unmolested; their only food the wild roots, or the few birds that came in the way of Rudolph—their only drink, the waters of a spring that welled forth from the rock, in a cavity of which they had taken up their dreary abode. Here the gentle Etelina became a mother. Though all unused to such altered circumstances, it fared not altogether ill with them, in this their outcast condition, so long as the summer lasted. Rudolph was indefatigable in his exertions to procure the necessary sustenance for his beloved bride, and he was generally successful in his attempts; they were all in all to each other, which is a large ingredient in the composition of happiness; and the pledge of mutual affection which now existed, binding them but the more firmly to each other, made them almost forgetful of every thing else except their own little world of love, and hope, and pure enjoyment. In truth, they wanted for nothing; love and affection were with them; and what can be desired when they are in possession? The summer, however, sped fleetly away; the yellow autumn quickly passed over; and soon the bleak winds of winter came from the north to chill their hopes, and freeze their prospect of future happiness. Food became scarce and scarcer still, as the season assumed a greater degree of severity; and when the snow lay on the hill tops and filled the valleys, when it loaded the leafless branches of the trees, and covered the ground, nought was to be had to appease their gnawing hunger. They were, in truth, on the point of perishing. In this dilemma, Rudolph, without communicating his intentions to his beloved wife, resolved to inform the baron, his sire, of their abode; and to implore his compassion and forgiveness, for the sake of those whom he believed to be equally dear to each.

“What boots it to me,” thought he, “whether I live or die: they must not perish. Let me be the sacrifice; I alone deserve to suffer. And, oh God!” he exclaimed, fervently, “punish me as thou wilt, but let them not be lost.”

Thus speaking, he strode forth with a determined countenance, and bent his hurried course towards Okkenfels.

It so happened, that on the morning of that very day the old:

baron had given a grand hunting party, and had summoned all his vassals and retainers to attend him, for the purpose of extirpating the wolves and wild boars in the vicinity of his castle, whom the inclemency of the weather had rendered wild with famine, and reckless with want. Rudolph encountered him in the heart of the forest, when the sport was at its height. The hapless husband of the lovely Etelina was enveloped in a huge bear-skin—it was his only garment; and he looked more like the hirsute denizen of another sphere, than a being of this world. The old lord was alone.

“Baron of Okkenfels,” spake the wretched Rudolph, in a deep, hollow voice, which well accorded with his gaunt figure, his glaring eye, from which famine looked forth, and his savage, uncouth aspect. “Baron von Renneberg, of Okkenfels, we are well met!—Wouldst see thy daughter die?—follow me!”

Rudolph struck into the wood, beckoning his father-in-law to follow.

The old baron would have replied to him; he could not find words in his sudden fright. He was terror-struck, for he deemed the fearful form which stood erect before him to be an apparition from the grave. With a palpitating heart, and tongue which clave to the roof of his mouth, he involuntarily pursued the path taken by this awful being. A few sharp turns, through tangled brakes and dense thicket, brought them to the foot of a scarped precipice, in the centre of which was a deep, wide excavation. The spectral-looking Rudolph passed into this cavity, and disappeared at once in its darksome recesses.

“Follow!” echoed from within its womb; “follow, Baron von Renneberg—follow, if you would behold your only daughter die!”

The baron entered. He could see nothing; but the receding sound of footsteps led him onwards. He followed the sound in silence: in a few moments a faint, flickering gleam, as of dying embers, pointed out that a place was near, where at least some human being had his wretched habitation. A few moments more, and the aged sire stood within the verge of an ample cavern, beside his savage-looking guide. But the picture

which presented itself to his eyes, as the darkness became habitual to them, made his heart bleed with pity and ache with remorse.

“Baron von Renneberg, of Okkenfels!” exclaimed his conductor, “behold thy daughter!”

The wretched Rudolph flung off the skin which concealed him as he spoke, and revealed to the view of his lord the care-worn traits, and famine-wasted lineaments, of his once young and handsome retainer. The baron looked aghast at him, but a feeling of rage, mingled with dread and horror, was uppermost in his mind; when, however, he looked where the hapless man pointed, every feeling of anger fled, for he there saw a sight which froze the current of his blood. On a heap of rotten leaves, covered only by the skins of wild animals, in an undressed state, lay extended his long-lost daughter, the young, the beautiful Etelina; now a being more like a corpse in seeming than a living, breathing, loving woman. Beside her a famine-wasted infant, of tender years, was busily engaged gnawing the bones of a wolf's cub, the only food its starving mother could afford it. The scene was one calculated to touch the hardest heart; and the proud lord of Okkenfels, with all his severity, was a father. In a distant corner of the cavern, Rudolph—the young, the gay, the brave, the handsome, the spirited—like a remnant of mortality which has witnessed the destruction of many generations, cowered down in a silence only broken by deep-drawn sighs, over a wretched fire composed of green branches and frozen leaves.

But a short interval elapsed between this occurrence and the full and complete reinstatement of Etelina and her husband in the castle of Okkenfels, and their entire restoration to the irate baron's estranged affections. The old man relented at the sight of their sufferings; and he became reconciled to their union, as it was no longer possible to prevent it. In a little while Etelina was convalescent. The very first use she made of her re-acquired influence with her sire, was in obtaining a pardon for the old priest, and a promise of his immediate release from the dungeon in which he had so miserably languished.

The lord of Okkenfels went forth from his daughter's sick chamber that night to liberate the aged chaplain from his dreary

abode. He descended into the lowermost dungeons of the castle: he stood over the den of death in which that venerable man had been so long immured. The heavy iron trap was removed by his own hands; the rope was lowered in the same manner: he bent down to hail the prisoner—to speak to his ears the words of freedom. As he thus stooped, with straining eyes, to pierce the unbroken gloom of that fearful habitation, he suddenly overbalanced himself in his anxiety to dive into its depths, and plunged headlong into the yawning gulf below him. A single exclamation of despair,—which burst from his lips as he toppled over the edge of the trap,—and one deep groan,—uttered as he dashed heavily on the rocky floor beneath,—were all the sounds he ever after emitted.

“A judgment!” were his last words. “A righteous judgment!”

He perished on the spot where he had vowed the rash vow already recorded.

Next morning the shattered corse was found by the old priest, in one of his darksome perambulations through the dungeon range. The castle was speedily alarmed, and assistance was immediately afforded; but it came too late to avail any thing. The soul of that stern old man had long gone to its account. The poor chaplain, however, was liberated at once; and soon after ended his days in peace, in the castle of Okkenfels.

What happened to Rudolph and his wife, the legend further saith not; but it is to be hoped that they sorrowed duly for their sire's death, and prayed sincerely to the Source of mercy for grace to his departed spirit.

In the parish church of Linz stands a proud monument, erected over the last mortal remains of the noble line of Renneberg. That monument covers the ashes of the Baron Reinhard, who thus perished. The family is said to have become extinct shortly after the period of its erection, A.D. 1257. It is ages since their strong castle became a ruin, or had other tenants than beasts of prey and uncleanly reptiles.

LINZ.

Linz, which succeeds Okkenfels in the ascent of the Rhine, is believed to be the ancient *Lentiacum* mentioned in the "Antonine Itinerary" as an outpost of the Romans in the time of Drusus Germanicus. Though now an insignificant place, it was formerly a free city of the empire, that dignity having been conferred on it in the year of grace 1330. The famous Engelbert the Holy, archbishop of Cologne, so often spoken of in these pages, shortly afterwards surrounded it with a strong wall, and built the massive towers which now flank its entrances, A.D. 1365. It was then the boundary tower of that archdiocese and electorate.

Linz is little famous for aught except it be, perhaps, the fierce and obstinate feuds which subsisted between its citizens and those of Andernach, through a long succession of ages. They are of too trifling an import to be alluded to more particularly here; but one circumstance in connexion with them is interesting, as illustrative of the rooted antipathy which may exist between people of the same blood, living under the same dominion, speaking the same language, having the same customs, and being, to all intents and purposes, identical with each other. For many hundred years no intermarriage took place between the inhabitants of either place; and nothing short of the universal calamity caused on the Rhine by the first French revolution, was, it is said, sufficient to efface the bitter feelings with which, even down to that recent period of history, they had regarded each other. The perpetual quarrel which stood between them, however far it may go to explain the singular effect, cannot make it perfectly comprehensible; the philosopher, who studies the phases of the human mind, must look to other and far different causes.

SINZIG.

On the opposite shore of the Rhine, a little above the *embouchure* of the mountain-stream, the Aar, stands another city, Sinzig. This place, which is undoubtedly of very ancient origin, is stated to be the *Sentium* or *Sentiacum* of the Romans, and to take its name, as well as its rise, from another outpost of that

all-conquering people, established there under the command of one of their generals, in the age of Augustus. It is, however, less indebted for any celebrity it may enjoy to the circumstance of its antiquity, than to the generally received and popular belief that it is the scene of the famous victory gained by Constantine the Great over his rival Maxentius (A.D. 312), in which the Greek cross appeared in the air, inscribed with the words "*Hac vincit*," or "*In hoc signo vincit*." History, however, fixes the spot on which this battle was fought at the Milvian Bridge, about nine miles from Rome: and if any credence can be given to the relation of the miraculous cross, to that scene alone may the honour of its appearance solely attach.*

THE CONVENT OF ST. HELENA.

On the slope of the hill which adjoins Sinzig, —almost impending over that city, —stands a large building, now a farmhouse, but formerly a famous convent for noble ladies, who resorted thither from all parts of the German empire. The name of this celebrated structure alone survives: it is still called after St. Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great, in whose honour it was originally erected. Of this abode of beauty and rank, through so many centuries, the following legend—one among the many which are stated to have been common in the country around—alone remains to tell the tale of

* This story of the cross in the air has puzzled philosophers for ages. Those who quote Voltaire, and affect to think for themselves, ridicule it as a clerical trick, or speak of it as the absurd invention of a dreamer; while, on the contrary, religionists of all sects give it their full and unqualified belief. Mosheim, a temperate and discreet ecclesiastical historian, concludes that "the only hypothesis which remains (after discussing the others which have been advanced) is, that this famous cross be considered as a vision, presented to the emperor in a dream." Perhaps the only reasonable one after all, is the radical one suggested by some of the most learned authors who have written on the subject, to discredit altogether the original statement of Eusebius, and to assume that, in giving it currency, he was himself deceived. These pages, however, are not the place to discuss such a subject.

its past greatness and its present decay. Whether it has any foundation in truth or not, is altogether without the province of this work to determine. It runs thus :—

THE GAME AT CHESS.—THE PFALZ-GRAF AND THE PRINCESS.

In the days when Otho the Third, then a minor, succeeded his father, Otho the Great, on the throne of the Western Empire (A.D. 963), the government was carried on by his mother, the Princess Theophania, daughter of Romanus the Second, emperor of the East, with a spirit and prudence worthy the daughter of a better sire, and the widow of so great a hero as her deceased husband. Willigis, the celebrated Archbishop of Mainz, of whom mention will be more particularly made in another part of these pages, was associated with her in the regency, and added the weight of his experience and sacred character to the wisdom of her administration. Otho was just three years old at the time of his election to the purple; and the empress

assumed, in his name, the sole power of the state. It was well she did so; for by her presence of mind, her penetration, and her extraordinary activity, she not only saved her son's kingdom in Italy from the designs of Crescentius Momentanus, the consul,* and his party, then most powerful in Rome, but she also rescued his person from the custody of Henry, duke of Bavaria, afterwards emperor, under the title of Henry the Second, who had captured him by cunning, and would have retained him by force, if the diet of the empire, convoked by her prompt agency, had not solemnly reclaimed their infant sovereign from this incipient usurper. The influence of three women of nobility and virtue, each, however, of a different country, was exerted in behalf of the young emperor's future welfare; they were his widowed mother, a Greek; his grandmother, on the father's side, Adelheid, an Italian; and his aunt, his father's second sister, Matilda, subsequently abbess of Quedlinburg, a German: and to its operation may be fairly attributed that extraordinary developement of his natural qualities which, in childhood, won him the name of "the wondrous boy," and in maturity made him the beloved ruler of his own subjects, and a model for all contemporary monarchs. Something of his celebrity may be also, in justice, ascribed to the care taken of his education by Gerbert, a learned French abbot, better known subsequently as the famous Pope Sylvester the Second, to which dignity he was raised by his grateful pupil on the death of Gregory the Fifth. Through the conjoint exertions of these four individuals, the young Otho became not alone one of the greatest princes of his time, but one of the greatest that ever governed Germany; and, had his brilliant career not been so soon cut short by the

* "In the minority of his (Otho the Second) son, Otho the Third, Rome made a bold attempt to shake off the Saxon yoke, and the consul Crescentius was the Brutus of the Republic. From the condition of a subject and an exile, he twice rose to the command of the city; oppressed, expelled, and created the popes, and formed a conspiracy for restoring the authority of the Greek emperors."—*Gibbon's History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, c. xlix.

Crescentius was the son of the infamous Theodora, and brother of her equally abandoned daughter Marozia, so well known in the papal history of the tenth century, as the mother, grandmother, and great grandmother of a succession of profligate pontiffs.

treachery of a disappointed mistress,* or some other cause, he might have become the rival of Charlemagne in glory, as well as his equal in legitimate influence and in extent of empire.

Among the counsellors of the empress, during the minority of her infant son, there was none more prized by her than Ezzo, Pfalz-graf of Aix-la-Chapelle; and none, in truth, of that bright circle, better deserved such a high and honourable distinction. Though young, his words had the wisdom and weight of age; and his actions did not belie them, but possessed quite a corresponding character. By his activity and untiring zeal, he had succeeded in causing the prompt and unconditional evacuation of Lorraine, then occupied by Lothair king of France, in the belief that the infant emperor was unable to contend its possession with him:† what, however, contributed to cover him with a greater glory in this transaction, was the entirely peaceful surrender of that important province of the empire. Not a blow was struck for its recovery. When, too, his juvenile master was treacherously made prisoner by Henry of Bavaria, Ezzo stood forward at once in his behalf, not alone one of the boldest declaimers in the Germanic diet, against this treasonable act of the duke, but also the most powerful, as well as most effective agents, for his immediate restoration to his sorrowing mother. He likewise supported, with all his might, the regency of the empress; and stood a tower of strength on her side, when defections took place among the

* "In the fortress of St. Angelo," continues Gibbon, in conclusion of the history of Crescentius, "he maintained an obstinate siege, till the unfortunate consul was betrayed by a promise of safety: his body was suspended on a gibbet, and his head exposed on the battlements of the castle. By a reverse of fortune, however, Otho himself, after separating from his troops was besieged three days without food in his palace; and a disgraceful escape saved him from the justice or fury of the Romans. The senator Ptolemy was the leader of the people; and the widow of Crescentius enjoyed the pleasure or fame of avenging her husband, by a poison which she administered to her imperial lover."—*History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, v. xlix.

Hermann (*Allg. Geschichte*, p. 159) says, "It was believed that Stephanus, the widow of Crescentius, destroyed the emperor in Rome with a pair of poisoned gloves, through jealousy of a Byzantine princess he was about to marry. Others, however, state that he died at Friesel."

† A.D. 978.

great princes and barons of the empire. It was nothing extraordinary, then, that Theophania should esteem him so highly as she did, and admit him to her most intimate friendship and confidence on all occasions: neither was it wonderful that a portion of that esteem with which she regarded the deserving subject should be infused into the mind of the young emperor, her son; the more especially so, as Ezzo was his principal instructor in the science of arms, and his sole referee in all matters relating to the usages of knighthood and chivalry. The countenance of the empress regent, and the growing favour of the youthful emperor, had, as usual, their influence on the court; and the Pfalz-graf of Aix, were it from that circumstance alone, was in a fair way to be accounted the most considerable person in the empire. But the gentleness of his manners, the absence of all assumption on his part, the general humility of his deportment, his known devotion to the interests of his sovereign and his excellent mother, the regent; his prudence, his frankness of character, his willingness to oblige, when it could be done with safety to the state; the liberality of his disposition, the magnificence and hospitality of his household; and, perhaps, as much as any, or even as all taken together,—his personal graces and natural gifts, secured to him the love and esteem which his wisdom, his valour, and his good faith had won, and made him the most truly popular subject in the whole extent of the wide realms of the successor of Charlemagne. Before the emperor had attained the age which the Frankish and German laws fixed as that at which the sovereign might reign without guidance or control,* Ezzo, Pfalz-graf of Aix, had become the first minister of the empire, the prime favourite of his sovereign and his mother, the empress

* Montesquieu makes it fifteen years, on the authority of Gregory of Tours, in relation to the case of Childeric the Second (A.D. 575–85), vide lib. i. cap. 5. of the works of that eminent ancient writer. The Ripuarian Franks, as well as the Franks called Salique, also the Goths, properly so called, the Ostrogoths, and the Burgundians, fixed, at the same age, the majority of a son or successor; “because,” continues the learned French jurist, commenting on the fact, “it was deemed necessary by them that his intellect should be sufficiently formed to defend himself in judgment, and his frame sufficiently robust to defend himself in mortal combat.”—*De l'Esprit des Lois*, lib. xvii. cap. 26.

regnant, and the idol of the court, the rural nobility and knight-hood, and likewise of the great mass of the burgher population of the empire. He was well worthy of all this honour.

Two ladies sat in the eventide radiance of the oriel window in the state apartment of the ancient and noble convent of St. Helena; they looked out over the wide and glorious landscape which spread itself out beneath them, like a curiously wrought carpet of the richest workmanship and most magnificent design. Both gazed on the prospect with apparently equal interest; but the thoughts of each were far otherwise occupied than with the transcendent beauties of the scene before them. In vain for them did the broad Rhine rush onwards in its bounteous course, resplendent in the mellowed glory of the setting sun, like a proud and gorgeous pageant; in vain did that noble stream seem to gird the emerald meadows over which it careered in its grandeur and its power, as with a band of the purest molten gold; in vain did the vine-covered hills, before, beside, and about them, rear their richly decorated heads, laden with the "showering grape," and crowned with the grim fortresses of the warrior-barons who dwelt on the banks of the mighty river, as if in designed contrast with the peace and plenty which reigned around; in vain did the faint tinkle of the sheep-bell strike sweetly on their ears, or the pastoral sound of the kine coming home—the low of the cattle—the song of the herd, "mellowed by distance," steal up from the verdant plain which spread out at the foot of the hill on which the convent stood, to soothe them with their simple but beautifully melodious combinations. They thought of other and different things—they thought of things that were not within the reach of human vision—but still the thoughts of both were not the same. It now remains to tell who were these high-born dames, and what was the subject of their meditations.

One of them was advanced in years; but she was still of a regal presence, and possessed the remains of great beauty. Her aspect was calm and collected; her eye seemed to see, not the things of this earth, but of heaven; and her placid brow bespoke a mind more devoted to the service of her Maker, than

to the duties of ordinary mortality. She leaned forward in the deep oriel window, and looked as though engaged in holy meditation. This noble dame was the pious abbess, Adelheid, sister of the deceased emperor, Otho the Great, and aunt to the young sovereign, Otho the Third, who then ruled the powerful Germanic empire. The other "ladye fair" was a maiden in the flower of her youth, who had just arrived at that period of her life when beauty breaks its bud, and becomes a wonder to the world. She was of a surpassing loveliness—the eye never tired of gazing on her. A perfectly oval face, a nose completely Grecian in its form, a mouth like the bow of the fabled god of love, teeth like pearls (ivory were too lowly a comparison), a chin moulded in the manner of the ancient statues of Minerva or Venus, and, above all and far beyond them, a countenance in its whole expression beaming benignity, grace, feeling, and goodness—a transcript, in short, of every virtue and grace which adorns and beautifies her most beautiful sex; but her eye was downcast—her brow was pensive—her cheek was "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought"—and as she pensively leaned her lovely head on her little hand, which seemed almost too delicate and small for being of mortal birth, the while her long dark tresses floated over her shoulders in wavy masses, and half concealed her radiant countenance from view in their glittering jetty veil, she seemed as though sorrow were her constant companion, and that the canker-worm of care and her heart had long made intimate acquaintance with each other. And reason good there was for it; for she was in love—deeply, madly in love—with one who wist not of his happiness: and she was in despair, for she knew not that her affection would be ever blessed with a fond return. This lovely ladye was the fair Matilda, sister to the reigning emperor, and niece to the noble abbess who sate beside her. She was then a temporary inmate of the Convent of St. Helena, at that time under the authority of her aunt, until she should have completed her education. The abbess—a pious, godly woman, who knew nothing of human passion but the name, or of human frailty but the result—had long desired to wed her lovely charge to heaven; and to effect that purpose she had spared neither counsel nor entreaties. The maiden, however, did not feel the sacred impulse sufficiently

strong upon her ; and therefore, though she hesitated to refuse, lest she should thereby offend her aunt, whom she dearly loved, she was not the less disinclined to the confinement of the cloister and the solitude of the monastic state.

During her last abode at the court of her brother, she had become enamoured of the all-accomplished and handsome Ezzo, Pfalz-graf of Aix-la-Chapelle ; and her love was not at all lessened by the perpetual praises which her mother, the Empress Theophania, bestowed upon his wisdom, his truth, and his valour. But

“ She never told her love ; but pined in thought ;
And, with a green and yellow melancholy,
She let concealment, like a worm i' the bud,
Feed on her damask cheek.”

In the fervour of a first affection, she exclaimed to herself as she left the imperial palace to return to her aunt at the Convent of St. Helena, “ I shall be his alone, or I shall never wed another.”

But though she deemed her love wholly unrequited, she was not, however, the less in error to think so. It was impossible that the Pfalz-graf could escape the power of her extraordinary beauty, nor did he succeed in his efforts to obviate its influence. In vain did he endeavour to avoid her—in vain did he exert himself to suppress the growing passion which consumed his whole soul—in vain did he seek to banish her image from his mind : she was to him as the loadstar to the benighted mariner ;—where she was, there was he also ; his efforts to avert the destiny that was inevitable to him, only aggravated the passion he sought to conquer ; and he could more easily have forgotten his own being than he could that sweet form and face, that noble and expressive countenance, that transcendent loveliness and virtue, which

“ Rose where'er he turned his eye —
His morning-star of memory.”

He was, in fine, helplessly, hopelessly, despairingly in love with her who was dying for him alone : and yet did neither know of the consuming passion which burned in the breast of the other.

Though of a noble and an ancient race, and the favourite of his sovereign to boot, the young Pfalz-graf could not, he argued within himself, "dare to look up" to so high an alliance as his sovereign's sister; and Matilda, for maiden modesty, never communicated her feelings to any one. Neither possessed a confidant, whose friendly interposition might have been available for their good: and thus both pined away with a passion which each deemed to be unknown, and believed to be unrequited. In this mood the maiden left the court of her brother, and returned to the Convent of St. Helena.

She had not, however, been long an inmate of this peaceful abode, when the noble abbess, her aunt, noticed a change in her manners, in her bearing, and in her whole deportment. Once gay as the lark, which rises to greet the sun and makes the morning skies vocal with his melody, she was now sad, moping, and melancholy as the love-lorn nightingale, which sings her hopeless ditty to the pale, cold moon. No longer did her songs bear the impress of a happy heart and a buoyant spirit—they were quite changed, and now of a gloomy character alone; they told only a tale of mental misery, blighted hopes, and bitter disappointment. No more did her light footsteps fall on the ear like fairy music;—she paced the corridor of the convent to and fro with a heavy tread, like a funeral mourner in the train of a dear friend departed for ever. Her spirits were fled; and with them had fled, too, much of her grace as well as her gaiety. She was no more what she once had been. The change which had come over her was strikingly manifest to all. It was within a few short weeks after her return that this change took place—it was at this time, too, that she sat with her aunt—and then also it was that the following brief but expressive conversation ensued between them.

"My dearest child," spake the kind-hearted abbess, in a tender, maternal tone of voice, "you seem quite unlike yourself of late. What can be the matter with you? Do you ail? Are you ill? Nothing seems to please you now—you, who not long since found pleasure in every thing that came under your observation."

Matilda cast down her large, dark eyes, and was silent; but she could not altogether conceal her deep emotion. She turned

to her harp, which stood beside the recess of the window, and for a while

“ She busied herself, the strings withal,
To hide the tear that fain would fall.”

“ I have long thought, my dear aunt,” she said, partly in reply, partly to divert attention from her own distress ; “ I have often thought how happy I should be if I were in heaven.”

“ That is, my dear, good child,” observed the abbess, patting her affectionately on the cheek ; “ the only way to deserve that happiness is to become the devoted servant of God. Wed yourself to Christ and to the holy church, and then you are sure of heaven.”

“ I may not do so, dearest aunt,” she answered with a deep sigh ; “ Oh ! I am unworthy of heaven and of God.”

She thought as she spake that heaven would be little to her without her beloved ; but she said nothing which could betray the intensity of her passion for him to her pious relative.

The abbess looked pityingly on her, and shook her head, as though she would have said, “ You are a lost lamb from the fold ;” but she too was silent, and only sighed and crossed herself, praying internally, the while they continued together, with much apparent unction.

The vesper bell soon after summoned them to the chapel, and they separated for the night.

The mid-day meal was over in the imperial palace at Aix-la-Chapelle, and the emperor played at chess with the Pfalz-graf Ezzo, to wile away the tedium of a leisure hour. The attendants of the court stood around, and watched, as courtiers will do, the progress of the game ; but they watched it with more than courtiers’ interest, for the young monarch was a devotee of that noble sport, and the Pfalz-graf had long been reckoned the best player in the kingdom. The parties engaged played for some time with various success.

“ Pfalz-graf of Aix,” said the emperor, at the conclusion of a very sharply contested game, in which his opponent had come off victorious ; “ Pfalz-graf of Aix, I prithee, let us now play in good earnest. Whosoever wins three good games together from the other, be his whatever he requires that his vanquished ad-

versary may have in his possession or in his power. Will you risk the stake? Will you take these odds?"

"Done, my lord emperor!" cried the Pfalz-graf, laughingly. " 'Tis a match!—'tis a match!"

"We'll have rare sport," whispered the spectators, in a way intended to be heard.

The game proceeded. The court were absorbed in attention; not a word was spoken by either of the contending parties; not a breath was audible in the eager and officious throng that crowded around them. What the emperor designed within his own mind to claim if he were the victor, is not now known to posterity; but Ezzo had at once made up his mind on the moment to demand of his defeated opponent a prize which even the proudest monarch in Europe might envy. The first game now drew to its conclusion; the chances were equal. The attention paid to their play by the parties engaged could not be surpassed—the bystanders were all agitated by the expected issue of this peaceful conflict. At length a skilful move was made by the Psalz-graf—his opponent was irremediably tricked—and the laughing emperor at once acknowledged his own defeat by the cheery cry of "checkmate."

"And now, Sir Pfalz-graf," said he, "we begin again. Your mettle is about to be put to the proof.—I'll work you in this game."

"Fortune favours the daring," thought Pfalz-graf. "I am ready, most noble master," was his reply to the emperor's challenge.

They now played the play known to all lovers of that interesting sport as "The King's Knight's Game;" that which they had just played was "King's Bishop's Game."

The emperor was ardently anxious to win; the desire of victory greatly excited him; and his manner betrayed his wishes, notwithstanding his endeavour to make it appear the contrary. Ezzo, on the contrary, was calm, cold, and motionless; nothing in his look or aspect gave symptoms of what might be passing within his mind, and he looked as indifferent to the result as if he were only an unconcerned spectator. The game proceeded. After a variety of moves, the play was in this position. The Psalz-graf leaving his "Bishop" *en prise*, and taking

with his "Queen" the "King Bishop" of his adversary, moved his pawn on the emperor's "King," giving him at the same time "double check" and "checkmate." It was easy to see how it would end.

Again the game was won by the Pfalz-graf, but his adversary did not again cry checkmate so cheerily as he did before. There was a strong sensation manifest among the courtiers who surrounded the table; none of them, however, envied Ezzo his success; which was strange, too, considering that they were human beings, and the creatures of a court besides.

"My lord! my lord! we'll begin again," said the emperor hastily, but with a serious mien, and a fixed look of gravity in his handsome countenance. "Let the game be King's Gambet, an' it please ye, my lord."

"Agreed, most mighty emperor!" replied the Pfalz-graf playfully, but he prayed inwardly with a fervency and a depth beyond ken, that the fortune which had sat at his right hand through the preceding play would not, as usual, forsake him at the moment when success appeared most certain.

They commenced again,—cautiously and in deep silence—this the most difficult game known; abounding as it does in brilliant and interesting positions, and possessing more variety than any other in the category of the science of chess. The emperor played desperately;—his heart was in his game: but it was evident that he was flustered and confused. In this, perhaps, the most skilful of all the combinations of that scientific amusement, he shewed himself, as compared with his opponent, a very young player indeed. Like all fresh and ardent spirits, he sacrificed a pawn at the onset of the game for the sake of an attack; but with the same fortune as they generally experience in the end, he sustained a discreditable reverse. After a series of the most brilliant moves, following each other successively and without intermission, the emperor's "King's Knight" was put *en prise* by his adversary's "King;" his "Queen's Knight" was played out by the opposing "Queen;" and the Pfalz-graf finally checking his "King" with his own "King's Bishop," gave him a third and last time checkmate.

"You have won the match, my lord," spake the emperor, with some severity of manner:—no one wishes to be overcome,

even in sport. "You have won the match, my lord; the game is your own. Name the stake, and spare me not. I have pledged myself to pay you; and pay you I will, whatever it may be."

It was a trying moment for Ezzo. A thousand "hopes, and fears that kindle hope," flashed through his mind in a single instant of time, and made the colour come and go in his cheek, as though he were a blushing maiden in the presence of the beloved object. The courtiers waited in silent expectation of the result;—eager anticipation was in the eye of each; and each guessed the claim as his own desire prompted him. The ambitious deemed that the young Pfalz-graf would ask for honour and for power;—the avaricious thought of nought as worthy of being demanded but wealth;—and the giddy and the gay reckoned only of pleasure, and of the means and appliances to secure its enjoyment. The emperor stood erect—a sovereign in every sense of the word. His brow was now clear, for the slight feeling of disappointment and irritation which clouded it at the consciousness of being vanquished before his whole court had quite passed away; and he thought only of fulfilling his word, and granting to their utmost extent the wishes of the conqueror. He might have had his anticipations too, and no doubt he had them; but nought in his mien or his bearing gave countenance to such a belief; and perhaps, after all, he suppressed any tendency they might have to spring up in his mind, until the moment arrived when he should know the exact nature of the Pfalz-graf's demand.

"Speak out, Sir Pfalz-graf," he said in a kindly tone; "say to us thy wish. We have plighted our imperial troth to pay thee, and, were it the half of our empire, you shall have it."

The Pfalz-graf bent lowly upon one knee, and bowing down his head, remained motionless for some moments; a deep silence pervaded the throng of courtiers; the emperor himself neither stirred nor spoke. The thickened breathing of the kneeling nobleman, and the audible palpitation of his heart, were all that could be heard in the circuit of that spacious chamber.

"My lord and emperor," he began, "I pray your pardon."

The emperor nodded graciously on him, and gave him a smile of encouragement to proceed.

“Most powerful sovereign,” he continued, “I have loved long and well—one——”

His voice faltered as he spake, and he trembled like an aspen tree in a breeze. The emperor, however, looked on him with a countenance so full of kindness and esteem, that he soon recovered himself, and resumed the unfinished sentence.

“—— One, my lord, who is to me more than life or worldly hope! Oh, most gracious sovereign!—Give her to me.”

The emperor seemed somewhat amazed at this unintelligible rhapsody, and the courtiers scarce knew what to think; but they faithfully reflected the manner and look of their master, as courtiers, in all time and place, have ever done and ever will do. He looked inquiringly at the Pfalz-graf; but the Pfalz-graf could not or would not proceed any further in his speech.

“Nay, my Lord Pfalz-graf,” quoth the emperor, “say at least who may the fair ladye be—let us know that at any rate. And if she will wed thee, then thou shalt have her; ay, even if our own heart were in her keeping, and she were our betrothed bride. So speak out, my lord.”

“The ladye Matilda—your angelic sister,” stammered forth the Pfalz-graf, covering his eyes with his hands, and prostrating himself at the feet of his sovereign.

A murmur pervaded the courtly crowd at the mention of this name, and audible whispers of various import circulated in all quarters. The emperor alone seemed unmoved: he still stood high above them all, calm, serene, and inscrutable. Some moments elapsed in this manner. At length that solemn silence was broken.

“Rise, my Lord Pfalz-graf,” spake the monarch graciously; “be it as you wish; and my sister will wed you, she is your bride. Embrace me, my brother.”

As the noble-hearted emperor embraced his subject—so shortly to be his brother—amid the acclamations of the pliant courtiers, his mother, the Empress Theophania, entered the apartment, and was soon made acquainted with the cause of the scene, and the nature of the circumstances which led to it.

“Bless ye both—bless ye—bless ye both, my children!” she exclaimed in the fulness of a joyful heart; “ye are worthy of

each other's love, and my dear Matilda is worthy of such a husband and such a brother."

Again the pliant courtiers applauded. Ezzo was almost beside himself with the excess of his happiness. The emperor and his mother withdrew from the hall, beckoning the Pfalz-graf to follow them to their private apartment. He did not delay long after them, but broke away from the courtly throng as speedily as etiquette would permit him.

"And now, my brother," spake the emperor, handing to the Pfalz-graf a sealed letter as he said the words, "take this to St. Helena, and give it yourself to my sister. She will read it in the presence of our noble aunt; she will then return to Aix under your guidance and escort, if she will. I shall not bid ye quick speed, because I know you require no spurring. Adieu, my lord, adieu!"

The next hour did not find the ardent Ezzo within three leagues of Aix. He hastened as though on the wings of the wind to the distant abode of his beloved, and he was followed thither by the blessings of the empress and the good wishes of the court.

The matin service was over in the Convent of St. Helena, and the nuns had all retired to their respective cells previous to assembling again in the refectory for their frugal morning meal. Among those who sought the narrow solitude of one of those little chambers, the first was the lovely Matilda, the sister of the emperor. She had knelt at the altar, but her orisons were for another and not for herself; she had bent before the sacred shrine of the Virgin, but she thought only of her lover; she had prayed to God, but the pomp and circumstance of the magnificent service she was engaged in only brought the more distinctly before her mind's eye the splendour of the imperial palace at Aix, and the happiness she should feel if she could but share it with her worshipped Ezzo. In this mood she left the chapel, and entering her cell, pensively flung herself on the simple couch, its only furniture, thinking the while of her probable destiny, and deeming fortune little favourable to her young and ardent desires. As thus she sate, she was aware of the

quick tramp of horses in "hot haste" hurrying towards the sacred edifice. Urged by an impulse of surprise and curiosity, she arose and went to the latticed window of her cell. Looking out on the noble landscape beneath her, she beheld two knights, armed *cap-à-pié*, urging their reeking steeds up the steep ascent which led to the principal portal of the convent. Her heart misgave her, but she wist not wherefore. She retired rapidly from her casement as the foremost knight reached the great gate and sprang off his jaded animal; and strove, but in vain, to dissipate a crowd of thoughts, waking visions of happiness, which crowded suddenly on her soul. In a moment more she was summoned to the public parlour of the convent, to receive a message from her imperial brother.

"Most noble ladye," spake the Pfalz-graf of Aix, as she entered the parlour, the while he bent his knee and held forth her brother's missive. "Most noble ladye, I am the bearer of a letter from my sovereign."

The gentle maiden blushed like a spring rose, as she saw him who was the idol of her heart;

"Her hope, her joy, her love, her all;"

kneeling before her, and heard the sweet tones of his voice sounding in her ears like the music of heaven. She knew not what to do, for very shame;—she could not speak for girlish embarrassment; and she suffered him to remain longer in that suppliant posture than the rules of courtesy warranted, or perhaps than she was herself aware of. At length she recovered, in some slight degree, her self-possession, and taking the letter from his hand, bade him rise, in a voice which trembled with emotion like the diapason of an organ rolling along the fretted vaults of a Gothic cathedral. She broke the seal with an unsteady hand, and read in silence:—

"BELOVED SISTER,—Greet in the bearer of this despatch our trusty and well-beloved cousin and counsellor, Ezzo, Pfalz-graf of Aix, your destined bridegroom and our desired brother; and return in his charge, as speedily as you list, to us and to your mother, in our fair city of Aix. Sir Ezzo himself will explain every thing needful for you to know in relation to this

our gracious will and imperial pleasure, and assure you once more of the affection of

“Your loving brother,

“Given at our Palace of Aix-la-Chapelle,
this twenty-second day of May, in
the year of our Redemption one
thousand and one.”

“OTHO III.”

Why prolong this tale of love?—Why relate a story of rapture which all have felt or will feel? Yet though often told, it is a tale still new; and still will it have charms for all ages, while human nature is human nature, and man is man. Matilda knew not what to say or what to do. The commands of her sovereign—the will of her brother—were in perfect accordance with the feelings of her own heart; yet with a true maiden perversity she would fain have disobeyed the one, and at the moment averted the other. She hesitated to speak, but she blushed more eloquently than words; and her glowing cheek told what language must ever fail to express—the fervour and intensity of a first and only love. Her doubt and uncertainty were not, however, of very long duration; she stammered a few incoherent syllables, and then hid her downcast eyes in her rosy fingers.

“Matilda! Matilda!—dearest, best Matilda!” cried the Pfalz-graf, springing towards her, and imprinting the seal of love—a burning kiss—on her fair forehead—

“A long, long kiss of youth and love.”

“My own, my own Matilda!”

“My Ezzo!” was all she could whisper before she sank senseless in his arms.

The tide of joy had been too overpowering for her; it carried her away with its rushing current. When she awoke to consciousness, her lover was on his knee beside her, bending affectionately over her prostrate form; and she felt the soft pressure of his hand as he chafed her temples, and smoothed down the raven ringlets on her sunny brow. Her recovery was not long in taking place—happiness seldom slays those affected by its influence. At the suggestion of her lover, the ladye abbess, her noble aunt, was now summoned to the parlour.

Another scene of hesitation and fear on the part of the ladye was followed by some religious exhortation on the part of the pious abbess. When the Pfalz-graf informed her that he was the admirer of her niece, she expressed a momentary indignation — deemed him little better than a wolf, ready to devour one of her flock ; but when he said that the princess approved of his suit, and when, in addition, the gentle maiden herself confirmed his assertion, and the emperor's letter put into her hands, she gave way to milder feelings.

“ God's will be done !” said she resignedly, as she finished the perusal of that document. “ The emperor must be obeyed. And, after all, marriage is a holy state, and sanctified by the assent of the Lord ; not but that singleness is one far better. But, God's will be done !”

The tide was at once turned—it now ran full in the lover's favour. The good-natured abbess grew immediately as kindly disposed towards the Pfalz-graf as she had been recently exasperated against him. Perhaps the opportunity which she had of seeing him more closely—perhaps his exemplary patience under her pious objurgation—perhaps his graceful form and handsome face—perhaps any thing, and perhaps every thing, all and several, had their effect in influencing her : but the simple fact is, that she treated him with the greatest distinction—nay, affection—while he sojourned in the neighbourhood of the convent, waiting till the object of his love should be ready to return with him to Aix ; that she fortified them with relics, and covered them over as it were with a buckler of blessings, when they departed on their journey ; and that her confidant and friend, under the solemn assurance of secrecy, told half the convent, who speedily communicated the interesting fact to the other half, that the abbess shed tears all that day ; “ more,” she added in a whisper, “ more, I believe, on account of the young and handsome Pfalz-graf, than on that of the Princess Matilda.” She was consoled, however, by her other niece, Sophia, sister of Matilda, placing herself under her spiritual guidance, and taking the veil shortly after in the Convent of St. Helena.

The lovers sped on towards Aix with as little delay as possible. They were met outside that ancient city by a gay cavalcade, including all the worth, and beauty, and nobility of the German

empire; and they were conducted under that splendid escort to the court of their sovereign and brother. Their nuptials were speedily celebrated. The emperor had then the pleasure of rewarding a faithful friend, who never failed in his devotion to his interests when his prospects were at the worst; while his mother had the happiness of evincing her gratitude to her best and most powerful supporter, when she most needed assistance and support, by giving him her beautiful daughter in marriage.

Thus ends the story. A few words may be permitted in relation to the lives and fortunes of the other principal actors in this drama. And, first, the empress mother,

THEOPHANIA.

To the influence of Theophania, according to Vogt,* may much of the civilisation of the Rhenish people, in this (the beginning of the eleventh) and the succeeding centuries, be fairly attributed. "Endowed with a clear understanding," writes a contemporary historian,† "rich in all natural and acquired gifts, beautiful in face and form,‡ surrounded and accompanied by all the pomp and pride, the arts and refinements, the splendour and the luxuries, of Greece and the Greek empire, she sojourned successively in each of the great cities on the Rhine, dispensing costly presents among the poorer classes, extending the blessings of a superior intelligence among the rich and noble, and gratifying them every one by her bounty and condescension." When the polished manners of the court of Constantinople at that period come to be considered, in connexion with the rudeness which then prevailed all over northern Europe, and especially in Germany, the advent of this extraordinary woman must have been as advantageous to the empire, as the spectacle of civilisation which she presented to its eyes, must have been both singular and surprising. She usually rode a-horseback, according to contemporary authorities, on a beau-

* Rhein. Geschicht. u Sagen. Band. 1. Frankfurt, A.M. 1817.

† The author of "*Die Sachsische Chronik*."

‡ "*Ingenio fecunda et vultu elegantissimo*," are the words of that ancient writer.

tiful Arabian steed, most magnificently caparisoned,—the saddle-bow and bridle, the housings and body ornaments of the animal, being of the richest material and the most costly workmanship; and a large plume of ostrich feathers ever waved gracefully from her horse's head. Her personal garniture was not less gorgeous than that of her steed, and far transcended any thing which had till then been known among the mothers and maidens of Germany. Her long, dark-brown locks, were gathered into a braided roll at the back of her head, and enclosed in a cap of golden network; a stray tress, however, in graceful negligence, would ever and anon steal from that sumptuous bandage, and play all unconsciously over her bright, sunny brow; her beauty softening her majesty, and rendering her loveliness still more irresistible. Priceless pearls of the fairest hue graced her swanlike neck. Diamonds of the purest water sparkled at every turn of her noble-formed head; but the jewels were eclipsed by the brilliancy of her beaming eyes, and her exquisite complexion. From her fair and heaving bosom to the tiny sandals which, all too small for any other, defended her little feet, flowed a garment of the richest purple velvet, in grand and graceful folds. Over this she wore a shorter tunic, inwoven with gold and precious stones, reaching to her knees, and which was drawn tight round her taper waist by a broad golden girdle fastened immediately under the breast. An ample cloak, of imperial purple, decorated with a deep gold fringe, and fastened by rich clasps of sapphires and diamonds, depended from her shoulders, and floated over the crupper of her stately steed, giving her an air of indescribable grandeur and majesty. Such was the appearance of Theophania—such was the equipment of this princess. Accompanied, as so much loveliness was, by that superiority of civilisation which elevates and refines human nature, it is little to be wondered at, if, in the plenitude of her beauty and her power, she was regarded by the semi-barbarous people over whom she was called to reign, as a superior being, and worshipped by the young and the imaginative among them even as a divinity. It did not at all detract from the enthusiastic veneration with which she was looked up to,—but the contrary,—the talent which she exhibited for government, and the masculine spirit with which she met the approach of the

most imminent danger, in the field as well as in the cabinet.* Perhaps no female, that ever occupied the high position she held, gave such unequivocal satisfaction to the people she presided over with an absolute power during the long minority of her son.

Under her enlightened rule the country prospered, and its inhabitants grew great. Learning and abilities, among the ecclesiastical princes of the empire, were the best passports to her favour; zeal and integrity, among the unlettered knights and nobles, were ever sure of fitting and adequate recompense at her hands. The activity of the commercial towns and cities, especially of those on the Rhine—her favourite abiding place—increased with every year of her administration; and fresh vitality was infused into the spirit of improvement always existent among them, by her unvarying grace and constant encouragement. Their public edifices, their town-halls, their churches, their palaces, were either beautified by her direction, or rebuilt at her command. Religion was observed, learning was exalted. This period of German literature is fertile in Latin poems and chronicles, written by monks and also by nuns, in Latin, and in some cases even in Greek: and it is more than probable, that the beautiful architectural monuments in the Byzantine-Gothic style of art so abundant on the shores of the Rhine, either took their rise from her bounty, or were carried into effect at the express desire of this incomparable princess.

In the imperial court itself, there were a number of new offices created, after the example of that of Constantinople; and the forms which regulated it were adopted from the same model as much as they could be made to coincide. To these offices Theophania appointed the ablest men, and the most exemplary women in the empire. The consequence of this admirable arrangement was, that no northern court then in existence could equal the German, either in the amenities which make mere existence more agreeable, or those intellectual pleasures in which none but the highly cultivated can participate. The attractions of this delightful society are strongly evidenced by the regretful testimony of the French monk, Gerebert, or Ger-

* "*Regnum filio custodia servabat virili,*" writes Ditmar.

bert, afterwards the celebrated Sylvester the Second, who lived in it as tutor to the young Emperor Otho III., previous to his election to the papal throne. Theophania was the Aspasia of this *Academia*, but with none of her prototype's laxity of morals; and Gerbert might have been the Socrates of her school, in all but the Athenian sage's superhuman wisdom. "When I remember," says that famous pontiff, in after years,* "the bright and beautiful countenances which there beamed on me, and recall to mind the pleasant Socratic discourses in which we were wont to be ever engaged, I think how I forgot, for the moment, all my many sorrows; and how the bitter thought of my exiled condition, except at these times always present to my mind, tortured my soul no longer." Such was Theophania.

OTHO THE THIRD.

The object, however, of all Theophania's care and solicitude, her infant son, Otho the Third, spent the few short years of his life in any thing but happiness, and died a violent death, before he reached even the earliest period of manhood. But though his reign was brief, it did not in any wise disgrace his great descent, nor did his actions discredit the lessons of those excellent individuals to whom his education had been intrusted. Before he had attained his twentieth year, he had thrice crossed the Alps, and thrice entered Italy at the head of an irresistible army: twice, too, had he filled the papal throne with his own creatures—Gregory V., and his tutor, Sylvester II.:—and twice had he defeated and humbled the senator Crescentius and the turbulent populace of Rome, who, during his minority, had been omnipotent in that city. Well, therefore, did he deserve the popular titles of the *Welt-wunder* (wonder of the world), and the *Wunder-kind* (wondrous child), so liberally bestowed on him by his astonished contemporaries. His frequent absence from Germany, however, and the consequent apparent neglect which the great mass of his jealous subjects felt, or fancied to experience, from that cause, gave rise to very many reports derogatory at once to his virtue and his patriotism. Some among those who originated these rumours, or spread them

* *Epistole.*

abroad, have even gone so far as to glory in his premature death, and to exult that he was taken away from his country before he had time to accomplish the design with which they unanimously agree to charge him; namely, that of deserting Germany for Italy, and of fixing in "the seven-hilled city" the seat of the imperial power and government. The following passage from an ancient writer,* will be found to contain much of the scandal circulated respecting this hapless young prince, as well as a tolerably authentic account of what is almost universally admitted to be the cause and manner of his death.

"The Emperor Otho," pursues this quaint chronicler, "had to wife Maria of Arragon, a wanton, unclean, and lascivious woman, but she was altogether unfruitful, though mightily addicted to the male sex. This wicked wanton had ever along with her, disguised in woman's attire as one of her hand-maidens, a youth of tender years, who was her favourite lover. Daily was this youth to be found by her side—hourly was he to be discovered closeted with her; but no one believed him at the time to be otherwise than a girl, and it was not suspected by any that he was aught else than a most innocent maiden, such as be-seemed a virtuous queen to keep in her service. However, it came at last to the ears of the emperor, that this minion was the means of his great dishonour, and he had him brought into the presence accordingly, without any apprisement of his purpose. There, in the face of some of his own dearest friends, the highest princes of the empire, he caused the clothes to be plucked off him; and then this false maiden stood forth revealed for what she really was—a lusty youth, the queen's paramour, and the instrument of his sovereign's disgrace. The emperor, by the advice of his court, sentenced him, without more ado, to be burned alive; which sentence was accordingly executed.

"But the tragical end of her favourite was not sufficient to quench the evil passions of the wicked empress, nor to appease the thirst of her unlawful longing; so she speedily cast about for another, to fill his vacant place. This is how she did.

"There was at that time living in Italy, near to the city of Modena, where the imperial court then abode, a nobleman of

* Münster.—*Kosmograph.*

the country, a count of ancient lineage, who was reckoned the handsomest man of his day, and who was also deemed to enjoy a very excellent character. With this nobleman the empress fell violently in love; and for a long time she sought, by every means in her power, to win his affection, and seduce him to her wicked purposes. But he cared nought for her; and, being the husband of a far more beautiful woman than she, he was not to be tempted from his troth by all her coaxing and all her cajoleries. This enraged her greatly; and her evil passion taking easily the form of bitter enmity, her desire of revenge soon came to know no bounds. She complained to the emperor, her spouse, that the count had made improper proposals to her, and stated that she had with difficulty saved herself from violation at his hands. The angry young prince, placing faith in her protestations, notwithstanding his bitter experience of her former treachery, condemned the hapless nobleman to immediate death. The sentence was executed without delay. But the innocent victim did not die wholly unavenged. Between the time of his arrest and his execution, he disclosed all the facts of the case to his sorrowing spouse; and he enjoined her, as she valued his eternal happiness and her own, to accuse the empress of his murder in plenary court, and to prove his guiltlessness of the crime for which he suffered, by herself undergoing the severest form of ordeal. She promised compliance with this his last injunction, and she kept her promise faithfully.

“The emperor was seated in the midst of his knights and his nobles, dispensing justice to all applicants for it, when the widowed lady of the murdered count stood suddenly before him.

“‘I demand justice, my liege!’ she cried; ‘I demand it by this token.’

“She held forth the gory head of her husband, as she spoke: it had been hidden under her garment.

“‘I demand justice on the empress,’ she proceeded: ‘I accuse her of treason to your bed, and of being forsworn to her marriage vow. She has murdered my husband: I demand blood for blood. If you be the vicegerent of God, you will not deny me justice. I am ready to prove my charge by the ordeal; I am prepared to die the death, if I fail to do so!’

“ The emperor was sorely perplexed at this demand ; but, piquing himself greatly on the severity and strictness with which he administered justice to all, he had no alternative but to grant it. He accordingly issued orders for the trial. During the period that intervened the accuser was unmoved ; fully confident in the rectitude of her cause, she boldly abided the result, and only expressed impatience at the slowness of the preparations. It was far otherwise with the guilty accused ; she was a prey to every conflicting passion that tears the human heart asunder. At the appointed time, in the presence of the entire court, the widowed countess held a glowing iron bar in her hands, and was unscathed ;—the same hour she walked over burning ploughshares, and was uninjured ;—that day she passed through every form of ordeal prescribed by the superstition of the period, and triumphed. The empress declined to undergo the trial, and appealed against the jurisdiction of the court. But this availed her not ; she was deemed guilty ; she was condemned to death ; and she suffered, by fire, the earthly penalty of her manifold crimes.

“ To the widow of the murdered nobleman the emperor gave many rich gifts, and restored to her and her children all the large estates which had been confiscated on his attainder.

“ Shortly after this Otho departed for Rome. In that immortal city he engaged him in an amour with the wife of Crescentius, the troublous senator, whom he had expelled from thence, for seditious practices, during his long minority. This lady was a noble dame, very lovely to look on, and possessed of great wit as well as great beauty ; but she was unhappily of an evil temper, jealous to the last degree, like most of the women of her country, and extremely selfish in all her feelings. This young sovereign met his death at her hands ; and she effected her fell purpose in the following manner. On his departure from Rome he left her behind him ; whereupon she made a great outcry, as though he had wiled away her virtue by a promise of marriage, and then basely abandoned her. Bent upon obtaining revenge for his alleged perfidy, she despatched special messengers after him ; which messengers were the bearers of a valedictory letter, and a richly wrought pair of gloves, her own handy-work. Her emissaries reached the camp and

executed their errand. The emperor read the letter; he smiled and sighed at the perusal of its contents, and then flung it into the fire: he drew the fatal gloves on his hands—alas! they were poisoned. Three days did he linger in unspeakable agony: no leech could cure him, such was the subtle nature of the venom; no medicine could give his dolorous sufferings the least alleviation. On the third day he died.”

Thus perished this promising prince, by an untimely death, long ere he had attained his twenty-first year.

The direct succession of the Saxon line of emperors became extinct in his person.

DATTENBURG.

We recross the river to Dattenburg. This is the legend of that ruined edifice.

THE DEAD BRIDE.

It was a wild wintry night, in the latter part of the fifteenth century. Then, as now, the once impregnable castle of Dattenburg was a shattered ruin—the abode of evil spirits in the popular belief, and the terror of the surrounding country. On this night, while the wind roared like thunder, and the raging river answered it with a stormy diapason still louder, a young knight, Kurd von Stein, who pursued his road from Hammerstein to Unkel, was belated on the way, and wandering far out of the direct path along the river shore, went astray among the mountains. While struggling with the blinding rain, and bearing up bravely against the wild blast, which assailed him with a wondrous fury, he saw a faint light in the far distance. Towards this light he immediately directed his steps. After much labour and considerable difficulty, he succeeded in reaching the ruins of the castle of Dattenburg; but it was then all unknown to him that such was the spot in which he had sought a refuge. In an upper chamber of the great tower, burned the light which had guided him thither. He had some trouble to discover an

entrance to the castle-yard, and more than once he felt over the huge blocks of basalt which lay scattered about in confused masses, as though cast there at random by some convulsion of nature ; but he at length succeeded in overcoming all obstacles, and finally found himself in the principal court of the castle. He was alone, and there were no signs of life in his vicinity, except it might be the snort or tramp of his tired steed, or the throbbing of his own heart, from the toilsome ascent. Long grass grew through the interstices of the pavement ; the walls of the edifice were roofless, the windows without frames ; desolation seemed to have made the place her dwelling. He shouted for assistance, he called aloud on the warders to come to his aid, he hallooed lustily for the domestics, but no one replied to him ; he was only answered by a faint echo, nearly drowned in the rushing of the wind, and the noise of the raging waters of the swollen river without. No other resource being left him, and having no alternative but to wait on himself, he fastened his horse to a half-prostrate pillar, and groped his way to the foot of the great tower, from whence gleamed the light which allured him thither. The door of the building stood half open, and he entered it without hesitation. Ascending the narrow and crooked stairs, he struck sharply at every door he passed, for the purpose of rousing the inmates ; but in vain : no signs of life were made manifest to his senses in any part of the ruinous pile. At length he attained the topmost story. As he stood on the narrow landing-place, a flood of soft, mellow light poured on him from an adjoining chamber. He looked into the apartment whence it proceeded, and there he beheld a lady sitting at a table, with her head leaning pensively on her hand. She was apparently absorbed in deep thought. This fair dame was young, and very beautiful ; but the vitality of her youth seemed to have been blighted by care or disappointment ; her cheek was wan and hollow ; and her eyes were dim, and sunk, and lustreless. So rapt did she seem to be in meditation, that the entrance of the young knight was quite unperceived by her, until he stood fully revealed in her presence, and proceeded to pray pardon for his involuntary intrusion on her privacy.

“ I have been belated, fair ladye,” he spake ; “ and I have lost my way in the storm. May I hope that it will not be a

trespass on your hospitality to give me shelter until its fury shall cease, or until the night passeth over?"

The ladye nodded her head assentively; but she made no other reply. The young knight, however, received it for an answer in the affirmative. She then rose from the table, and, placing a chair for the stranger beside her own, motioned him to sit. He did so. Not a word escaped her lips, although he was loud in his expressions of grateful acknowledgment. The table was loaded with the richest viands; game, and poultry of many kinds, were in abundance, and wine of various vintages was not a-wanting; but the youth knew not whence or how they came there, as he could perceive none of these things on his entrance into the chamber. The ladye beckoned him to partake of the banquet; still, however, she said no word that he could hear, though her lips moved slightly, as if she spoke inaudibly, or spoke to herself. He needed not much pressing, for he was very sharp set with hunger and fatigue; and he fell to, most heartily, with the keen appetite of four-and-twenty, whetted by a long, cold day's fast, and immense physical exertion. It was not until his hunger was well nigh appeased, that he discovered a singular omission in the *materiel* of the feast—an omission the more singular, as the articles in themselves were the most simple and valueless of all that stood before him;—bread and salt were not to be found on that well-furnished board. He could not guess what was the cause of it, and he did not well know what to think of the omission; but his heart somehow misgave him as to the reason, for now that he no longer felt the eager cravings of appetite, he had leisure to speculate on what he saw. Coupling this singular circumstance with the still more singular one of the maiden's silence and total solitude, he could not help feeling, involuntarily, some little degree of dread. The age was a superstitious one; and brave men, who would have faced a host of their own fellow-creatures single-handed, thought it no shame to confess their fear of ghosts, and to quail before fiends, and foul spirits. He made no comment, however, on the circumstance, but adopted the only means of comfort within his reach—copious draughts of a peculiarly generous wine. As he proceeded to drain off beaker after beaker of the delicious beverage, his fears began rapidly to dissipate: all the while, the beautiful counte-

nance of the maiden seemed to brighten, and her eye to grow full again with pleasure, as she perceived his spirits rise in the intoxicating process. His soul soon scorned all suspicions; his heart began to grow too big for his bosom; he was all magnanimity; and felt not a little of sensual passion. He had "screwed his courage to the sticking place." Pleasure was now distinctly visible in his fair companion's countenance.

"Loveliest of maidens," said he, looking on her with maudlin tenderness; "you are the daughter of this house?"

She nodded her head in reply, and smiled a gracious smile; but still he could hear no word from her lips.

"And who be your parents?" inquired he again, after a short pause.

Again she nodded, smiling still sweeter than before, and then pointed to a couple of portraits which hung against the wall of the chamber, just opposite where he and she were seated together.

Kurd von Stein looked at the portraits first, and then he looked at the maiden. There could be no mistake in the matter; the family likeness was too distinct.

"Are they alive?" he asked, once more addressing her.

She only shook her head sorrowfully.

"Have you any brothers or sisters?" he queried.

"I am the last of my race," replied she, in a voice soft as the whisper of the summer breeze, and sweet as the sound of an Eolian harp, on which the breath of a balmy eve is blowing.

The one great difficulty was now surmounted. This soft speech satisfied the young and ardent knight that he should not have a dumb bride, if fortune pleased to favour his suit with the maiden. Enraptured with her grace and beauty, animated by her smiles, and heated by the copious libations in which she had silently encouraged him, he fell desperately in love; and, long before the midnight hour had arrived, he had resolved to make her an offer of his hand;—his heart she already had in her safe keeping. He was poor in worldly possession, though rich in youth and health, and a very handsome form; and with a touch of worldliness almost incompatible with the purity of his pretended passion, he deemed that he could make no better selection than the daughter of a noble house, who

could afford to give such good cheer, and keep so excellent a cellar of wines. The desolate court-yard, with the long, rank grass waving over the pavement—the solitary chambers, tenantless, windowless, roofless—and the ruinous, unwatched outer walls of the castle, so faithfully imaging decay, were all forgotten in the fervour of his affection and the delirium induced by drink.

“ Fairest of fair ones,” stammered he, falling on one knee at her feet, after the most approved fashion of the period; “ loveliest of lovely creatures, may I ask you if you are free to wed?”

A nod and a smile were his answer. He had at the moment attained the summit of his happiness.

“ Wilt thou be mine!—my bride!—my own!—most peerless princess?” he uttered impassionedly.

The maiden’s pale face flushed with pleasure. She nodded her head again, and smiled more graciously than ever woman smiled on him before. Rising quickly from her seat, she hastened to an antique cabinet which stood in a corner of the room, and as quickly returned. In one hand she held forth a gold ring of the oldest fashion; in the other, a withered wreath of rosemary leaves. With not a moment’s delay she intertwined the faded garland in her long black locks; then proceeding towards the door of the chamber, she beckoned the knight to follow. A feeling of doubt, not unaccompanied with some degree of dread, flashed on the mind of the drunkard; but it was instantly dispelled by the fumes of the wine, and the sweet smile of the maiden. He followed her in silence to the castle chapel. At the gate of the sacred edifice they were joined by two persons whom he had not seen before. He looked on the strangers with some surprise, and to his sudden horror he saw that they were the originals of the two pictures which stood in his ladye’s chamber—her father and mother, who by her gesture in answer to his inquiry respecting them, he had been given to understand were long since dead. Again he hesitated, and for a moment the idea of retreat crossed his mind; but it was only for a moment—retreat was now impossible. What with the maiden before him, the black walls on each side of him, and the old couple behind him, bringing up the rear of the procession, he was, as it were, completely blocked in, and found himself irretrievably

in their power. They all entered the chapel together: it was lighted up as on the eve of some high and holy festival; yet the youth could not discover whence came that strong illumination, for neither torch nor lamp was to be seen within its precincts, and the black sky was only visible above its ruined roof. They approached the altar; every thing seemed to have been prepared in anticipation of the nuptials. In the centre of the aisle stood the proud monument of a bishop, one of the noble family of the castle, who had been dead and buried there upwards of a century; on the black marble, surmounting it, lay his recumbent figure in bronze, large as life, clothed in full pontificals,—the crosier in his hand, the mitre on his head. As the bridal procession traversed the aisle, in the order in which they had entered the chapel, the maiden, who was still in advance of the party, touched the figure with her fore finger, and then pointed mysteriously to the altar. In a moment more—fearful to relate—the bronze bishop rose majestically from his marble couch, and followed them within the railed enclosure. The knight gazed on the scene with dread and dismay—his heart completely sunk within him—for the influence of the wine had departed, and that of love lingered only a brief space after it. As he looked on every side to find a way to escape from the fiendish thralldom in which he felt himself held, his eye rested on the face of the bronze bishop. Oh, horror upon horror!—the eyes of the figure glowed like red-hot metal in a fiery furnace, and his breath seemed surcharged with all the odours of hell. The maiden, too, seemed no longer the same being as she who had so shortly before fascinated his soul; her smile had become almost demoniac, and her eyes, similar to those of the spirit-prelate, sparkled like *ignes fatui*. The only unchanged aspects in the group were those of the old couple, the father and mother of the intended bride; but their immutability of appearance was not less fearful than the alteration in that of the two others. They stood there pale and still, like corpses in their shrouds—their stony eyes giving no signs of life or motion during the entire proceeding—their rigid traits never relaxing for a moment from the still cold serenity of death.

“Kurd von Stein!” spake a hollow voice, as though it issued from the depths of the earth.

The knight started, and shook like an aspen in the breeze of the evening. It was the bronze bishop who called him by his name.

“Kurd von Stein!” repeated the same voice, in a tone still more hollow, “do you take the maiden before you, Bertha von Dattenburg, as your wedded wife?”

The voice of the youth quavered like the dying notes of an organ, when he essayed to make reply: he could not for the life of him utter a sound, such was his terror and trepidation.

“Kurd von Stein!” again asked the fiend in form of a bishop, “do you consent to take Bertha von Dattenburg, this maiden, as your ——”

At this instant, the crow of a cock from the near village of Leubsdorf was borne upwards on the gale, and the deep sound of the midnight bell of the Convent of St. Helena boomed heavily over the waters from the opposite side of the river.

“God have mercy on me!” were the only words the young knight could utter, when he was prostrated to the earth by the rush of a whirlwind which swept through the chapel. Bishop and bride, father and mother, all were gone in a moment. He saw no more.

When sensation returned, he perceived that a beautiful summer morning had far advanced on its way towards noon; and he found that he had spent the night under the shelter of a fallen fragment of the old walls, extended on the grass, which covered the court-yard of the castle. His faithful steed stood beside him, and neighed loudly, as though impatient for his awaking.

Was it a dream?

ARGENFELS.

A little higher up the river, on the same side as Dattenburg, stands the modern *Château, or Schloss*, of Argenfels. This structure rests upon a very ancient foundation, though it is by no means of great antiquity itself. The old castle which occupied its site ages ago, was the Stamm-schloss, or cradle of the Counts of Isenburg, one of the most powerful families on the Rhine.

By them it was beautified and greatly enlarged, being their favourite residence, until it was ruined in the Burgher-war, which took rise in the reign of Rudolph von Hapsburg, and desolated and destroyed the greater number of those strongholds of theft and tyranny on that noble river. From the Counts of Isenburg, its original possessors, it passed into the hands of the Counts of Leyen; and by them it was completely dismantled, and only the foundations left, on which were raised the present superstructure.

It is of one of the Counts of Isenburg—the last of his race—that the tale is told which follows. The period of its occurrence may be laid somewhere in the early part of the fifteenth century. It will be, perhaps, in the memory of the reader, that Argenfels was the abode of the beautiful Bertha and her sire, the old knight Rudolf von Isenburg, whose tragical end has been already related in these pages;* and there is no improbability in the supposition that the gentle heroine of that legend may be of the same stock with the sorrowing maiden whose melancholy story remains now to be narrated in this.

The original tale has been thus attempted:—

FAITH TO THE DEATH.

“Freundlos, ohne Bruder, ohne Gleichen.”—SCHILLER.

It was, in sooth, a sad and lonely spot,
A dreary, darksome, desolate abode;
Meet residence for Misery and deep Grief,
Who there might shroud them in its gloom, and muse
O'er bygone glories. Poverty and Despair—
That terrible twain—had made these hearths their home:
And those tall mouldering towers, adown whose sides
The dank dews trickled in huge drops and cold,
Looked like to Splendour's wasted shadow weeping
The dim and deadly change. No more, no more
Through those high halls shall peal the joyous laugh;
Nor the sweet strain of maid at even-tide
Linger like heavenly sounds within the ears

* Vide Section “The Seven Mountains.—The Strömberg,” vol. i. pp. 238–44.

Of those who, raptured, listened. Oh ! no more
 The stately dancers, sweeping down their aisles,
 To the warm breath of melting melody
 Shall wake those sleeping echoes. Now the owl—
 The midnight bird—its only music makes ;
 And the bat's brood those fond and foolish bands
 Alone replaces. Out upon this earth !
 That fair things ever thus should fade away !
 And nought within its limits aye endure
 But death. Out ! out upon it !—that this pile,
 Once so magnificent, should now be meet
 But for th' abode of these. Alas ! alas !
 That here pale Woe should ever choose to dwell !—
 It chills the soul to think on't !

In that hall,

The scene of riot once, and wasteful glee,
 How desolate now and drear ! a lone one sate,
 Crouching beside the vast but fireless hearth
 In very wretchedness. Beside her lay,
 Gaunt and attenuate, famished-looking, fierce,
 A noble hound, her sole companion now.
 Her head was on her hands. No sound escaped
 Her thin and blanched lips ; and naught gave sign
 Or indication of existence near her,
 Save a slow, rocking motion, such as make
 The weary of the world, when grief hath hold
 Upon their heart of hearts ;—and a faint sigh,
 That might be but the bitter breeze's moan,
 Down the long corridors creeping heavily ;
 Or else the creaking echo of some door
 Swung by the rising gale. Alas ! alas !—
 What did that ladye there alone ? Or why
 Was she thus desolate ?

For hours she sate—

She who was once the cynosure—the star—
 The light—the life—of many worshippers,
 A crowd that wooed her smile. Ah ! then it beamed,
 Beautiful as the morning sun's first ray
 On wanderer wearied. Still her beauty stayed ;

But oh, how changed and different ! Now she looked
 So pale—so wan—so wo-begone ;
 Like to the loveliest in the realms of death—
 If death owns aught that's lovely, or the grave
 Can boast of beauty.

Hark ! a stronger sound—
 A quivering voice's, —sweet, and sweeter still ;
 And now, a prelude like the dying swan's,
 Which sweetest sings, expiring ! Can such form
 Give forth celestial sounds like those which twine
 Thus round the inmost spirit ?—or that soul,
 Wasted as 'tis with woe, delight in song ?
 Alas ! the heart is deep, inscrutable ;
 And what we loved in bright and happy hours,
 But closer clings to it when time, and change,
 And death, and desolation, and despair,
 Have made sad havoc of it ! Yea, she sang,
 Even like th' expiring swan, in tremulous tone,
 Haply her requiem. Thus the burden ran
 Of that most doleful ditty :—

“ There was a time—there was a time —
 Ere sin brought with it sorrow,
 When in my fresh and flowery prime
 Glad thoughts from all I'd borrow :
 The buds in spring which decked the trees,
 The summer's blossoms glowing—
 The sere leaves swept before the breeze,
 When wintry winds were blowing.

The air to me was heaven—the earth
 Surpassing fair ;—each season
 Was happiest ;—aye, my mood was mirth,
 Wild joy chased sober reason.
 Within, without, all—all was bright,
 No voice of woe gave warning ;
 To morn succeeded merry night—
 To night, the merry morning.

And dance and song the blithesome hours
 Of care were still beguiling ;

In hall, or mead, or sunny bowers,
Time sped on ever smiling :
A tameless thing, with thought unchained ;
A heart no heed annoying ;
A head on which heaven's blessings rained ;
Thus lived I, ever joying.

But, oh ! a change—a weary change—
Hath left me lonely weeping.
It came on sudden, stern, and strange,
Like rude hand sweet harp sweeping :
A thunder-cloud, with forked shafts filled—
A wild, wild torrent roaring—
A vial of God's wrath outspilled—
It whelmed me with its pouring.

I loved, I loved—oh, fatal flight !
Why left I home so cherished ?
That passion fell has been my blight—
I wooed it, and I perished.
But yet the home—the hearts so dear—
The friends so fond regarded ;
What were they all if he was here,
For whom I them discarded ?

Even as the mild and mateless dove
In tenderest tones bewaileth
The loss of all she well did love,
Until her spirit faileth ;
So in my deep, deep dream of woe,
Through dreary days I grieve me ;
And all the hope I now can know,
Is what the grave may give me."

The sad song ceased, and to its saddening strain
The babbling breath of echo but succeeded,
As fast and far along those sounding halls
Its notes the rising wind slow swept.

Hark ! hark !

Another voice ; and, oh, how different ! yet
It hath a touch of tenderness and woe

Like that preceding it. Hark ! hark ! and now
 That gaunt, grim hound takes up the tearful tone,
 And howls, and howls, as though he would prolong
 The sorrowing strain. See how from his low lair,
 Where late he lay outstretched in lifeless seeming,
 He raises him. Oh, God ! 'twas fearful, too—
 And sad as ever sadness well could deem,
 To list his moanings as they crept all o'er
 Those fretted roofs. It seemed as though he mourned
 His mistress' lot, even as th' instinct of death
 Fell sensibly on him ; and with canine sorrow
 Wailed her deserted state. Three tottering steps
 He made towards her, and with eyes wherein
 The last dim light of faithful, fond, deep love,
 Strove hard with famine's ruthless grasp, he gazed
 Full in her faded face. One effort more—
 And then he licked her weak and wasted hand,
 And faintly wagg'd his feeble tail, and whined,
 As 'twere the bitterness of separation
 From her he'd loved so well and watched so close,
 Bemoaning as he might. Upon her lap
 Then slowly laid he down his heavy head,
 And stretched him out his gaunt and stiffened limbs,
 And died caressing her.

Alas ! alas !

That miserable ladye now has lost
 Her sole protector. Silent, and cold, and still,
 Is that kind heart which might have honoured man,—
 Ay, even the proudest which would term it brute,
 Or style himself superior. The poor thing
 Perished of hunger's pangs ! Alas ! for her—
 That ladye lone, and desolate, and drear—
 The last that loved, and could her lot alleviate,
 Hath passed away in him. She who had lived
 Of thousands the beloved, now lies reft
 Even of her faithful home. 'Twas sad in sooth !
 Yet was it so.

Within a few brief years

She'd seen her fondest wishes, fairest hopes,
 Blighted in the bud: her friends, her husband, all —
 All she had loved and cherished, die away
 Thus from before her ever-tearful eyes;
 And she, the sad and sole survivor, left —
 A blighted tree ere yet the blossom 's forth —
 To languish wearily.

Of noblest stock

And harsh, proud sire descended, she had left
 Her princely home, where pomp and pageant dwelt,
 To live within the inmost heart of one
 Who idolized her. But his stores were scant;
 And, save the gifts which nature, bounteous, gave
 In boundless and in bright profusion, he
 Had naught to share: alas, that 't should be thus!
 And that the withering breath of want should kill
 Such doating hearts. But fair, fond woman's love,
 Despises danger, — willingly braves death,
 And want, and woe, and every earthly ill,
 In its intense devotion.

Why dilate

Upon her sorrowful story? Foreign climes
 Afforded not the refuge that they sought.
 Her spouse, oppressed by all that weighs down man —
 Grief, poverty, and wasting, late remorse,
 To see his loved wife wrestling thus with want,
 Succumbed and sunk into the peaceful arms
 Of the cold grave; — another one to those
 Who make the myriad hecatombs which pride,
 And birth, and blazoned title, through all time
 Have offered at their reeking altars. Out,
 Out on such vile things! why should they mar
 Man's best and kindest affections?

She,

On his demise, within this drear abode
 Had sheltered. Of all she brought from home,
 But that poor hound — the favourite of her hours
 Of happiness, and hope, and joy — remained:

And now, and now that he, her last, sole friend,
Hath so departed, what is there for her? —
Death too!

Her tale is brief:—a few short hours
Had but elapsed, when by these mouldering walls
Slow swept a gay and gaudy cavalcade,
As though in quest of pleasure. It was strange
That to this spot her sire, by seeming chance,
Should now be led; as though the hand of God
Were visible in it. Unrepentant still,
Though tortured with the gnawings of the worm
That never dies—deep, bitter, keen remorse,—
He'd sped from home in quest of happiness here,
And found, instead of rout and revelry —
Yea, found within those dank and dismal halls—
His well-remembered hound, in death outstretched,
Pillowing his daughter's corse.

Not long survived he.

And oh, the death he died! I cannot more
Than pray that none may meet it, or may feel
Its awful pangs. Adieu! sweet friends! adieu!

RHEINECK.

Again passing over to the left bank of the Rhine, we next
light on Rheineck.

It is unknown when the old castle of Rheineck was first
built, so long ago is the time of its foundation. The present
structure was raised on its ruins at a very early period. A
dilapidated tower, in the most ancient style of architecture, was
all that remained of that once almost impregnable fortress,
until within a very recent period. Covered with hoar moss
and rank weeds, overgrown with ivy and brambles—the livery
of age and decay—this ruined remnant of the olden edifice
presented a striking contrast, in its rugged antiquity, to the more
modern erection which stands close beside it, arrayed in all the

garish pomp of civilisation, and evidencing, in every feature, attention and care.*

There are few castles, even on the romantic Rhine, which command so noble a prospect as Rheineck; and fewer still respecting which there are so many wild legends afloat among the contiguous peasantry. Of all those legends, however, there is none more marvellous than the following. It relates to a passage in the history of the last lord of the old family, Von Rheineck, the ancient possessors of the castle from the time of its erection; and its occurrence is fixed about the beginning of the thirteenth century, the period when that proud race became extinct, in his person, for ever.

Graf Ulric von Rheineck was a very wild youth; recklessly, and without consideration, did he plunge into every excess; dissipation, in short, grew to be the habit of his life, and no sensual indulgence did he deny himself, which could be procured by any means whatever. Amply provided for, however, as he was, the revenues of his wide possessions, which comprehended Thal Rheineck, and the adjacent country to the shore of the Rhine, and as far as the mouth of the Aar, were soon discovered to be insufficient for all his absorbing necessities. One by one his broad lands were alienated by him; piece by piece of that noble property fell off from his house; until, finally, he found himself without a single inch of ground which he could call his own, save the small and unproductive spot on which Rheineck stood. This he had no power to transfer, or perhaps it would have gone with the remainder. The castle had fallen sadly into disrepair, through his protracted absence from home, and his continual neglect of its reparation;—indeed, there was scarcely a habitable room within its precincts; and he now had no longer the means of making it a fitting abode for any one, still less for a nobleman of his rank and consequence. All without, as well as all within it, was desolate and dreary to the last degree;—the splendid garden, previously the pride of his ancestors, was overrun with weeds, and tangled with parasites and creepers; the stately trees, which once afforded

* Rheineck, once a ruin, like almost all the other old castles on the Rhine, was some time since re-edified, and is at present the residence of a family.

shelter and shade, as well as fruits of the finest quality, and rarest kinds, were all dying, or withered, or their growth obstructed by destroying plants, or perishing for want of proper attention; the outer walls were mostly in a ruinous condition; the fortifications were every one fallen into decay; and the alcoves and summerhouses had dropped down, or were roofless, and entirely exposed to the weather. It was only a most cheerless prospect to contemplate; but he could not now help himself, even if he had the will to do so. Day after day the same scene of desolation presented itself to his aching eyes; night after night did the same cheerless chamber meet his averted view. It was his own doing—that he could not deny to himself—and bitterly he rued it. But the wages of sin has ever been death. He found it so to his cost. To crown his helplessness and misery, his vassals and domestic servants abandoned him by degrees, one after another; and, at last, he was left entirely alone in the house of his fathers—a hermit in that most dismal of all solitudes—the desolate scene of our childish, our happiest recollections.

One evening, about twilight, as he sat at the outer gate, looking sadly on the broad bright river which flowed calmly beneath—he was aware of the presence of a stranger who seemed to toil wearily up the steep acclivity, on the summit of which the castle is situated. The stranger—an unusual sight within those walls then—soon reached the spot where Ulric sate; and, greeting the youth in the fashion of the times, he prayed him for shelter during the night, and refreshment, after his most painful toil and travel.

“I am,” quoth the stranger, “a poor pilgrim on my way to holy Cologne; where, by the merits of the three wise kings—to whose shrine I am bound—I hope to succeed in the object of my journey.”

Graf Ulric von Rheineck at once accorded him the hospitality he required; for though he had but scant cheer for himself, and nought of comfort to bestow, he had still some of the feeling of a gentleman left in him.

“I am alone here, now,” said he to the pilgrim, with a deep sigh; “I am myself as poor as Job; would it were not so! and all my menials have left me to provide for themselves, as I can

no longer provide for them. 'Twas ever the way of the world, and I may not blame them for it. The last departed yesterday ; he was an old favourite of my father's, and he once thought not that he would leave my service but with his life. We must now look to ourselves, however ; at least, so he said. — But that has nothing to do with the matter ; so enter, my friend."

They entered. By their joint exertions, a simple evening meal was soon made ready, and speedily spread forth on a half-rotten plank, their only table.

"I have no better to offer you," observed the young count ; "but I offer you what I have with right good will. Eat, if you can, and be merry."

They ate in silence ; neither spoke to the other during the meal.

"Surely," said the pilgrim, when it was over, "surely it may not be that the extensive cellars of this great castle contain not a single cup of wine for the weary way-farer !"

The count was at once struck with the idea. It seemed to him as if he had never thought of it before ; though, in reality, he had ransacked every corner of them more than once.

"Come, let us go together and try," continued the pilgrim ; "it will go hard with us, if we find nought to wash down our homely fare."

Accompanied by his persuasive guest, the count descended to the vaults where the wines of Rheineck had been stored for ages. Dark and dreary did they seem to him : a chill fell on his soul, as he strode over the mouldy floor.

"Here !" said the pilgrim, with great glee ; "here ! here ! Look ye, my master, look ye ! See ! I have found a cup of the best !"

The count passed into a narrow cellar, whither the pilgrim had preceded him. There stood his companion, beside a full butt of burgundy ; holding in one hand a massive silver cup, foaming over with the generous beverage, and with the other pointing exultingly to his prize. The scene seemed like a dream to Ulric ; the place was wholly unknown to him ; the circumstances, to say the least of them, were most extraordinary ; he mused a moment, but he knew not what to do in the emergency.

"We will enjoy ourselves here," said the pilgrim. "Here, on this very spot, shall we make us merry! Ay, here, beside this noble butt of burgundy—see! 'tis the best vintage! Let us be of good cheer!"

The count and his boon companion sat down on two empty casks; a third served them for a table. They plied the brimming beakers with right good will; they drank with all their might and main. "Good liquor opens the heart," says the proverb. The count became communicative, and talked much of his private affairs, as men in liquor will do: the pilgrim, however, preserved a very discreet silence, only interrupted by an occasional interjection of delight, or an opportune word of encouragement to the garrulous narrator.

"I'll tell you what," began the pilgrim, when the count had finally concluded his thrice-told tale; "I'll tell you what—so listen. I know a way to get you out of your difficulties, to rid you of all your embarrassments."

The count looked incredulously at him for a moment: his eye could not keep itself steady for a longer space of time. There was, however, something in the pilgrim's glance as it met his, that greatly dissipated his incipient unbelief, and made him almost gainsay his own incredulity. He inquired of him how these things could be brought to pass.

"But, mayhap," continued the pilgrim, apparently disregarding the manifest change in his companion's impressions respecting him; "that is, perhaps, you would be too faint-hearted to follow my advice, if I gave it to you."

The count sprang on his feet in a trice, and half unsheathed his sword, to avenge this taunt on his manhood; but the pilgrim looked so unconcerned, and evinced so little emotion withal, at this fierce burst of anger, that the action and its result were merely momentary. Ulric resumed his seat, and the pilgrim proceeded:—

"You tell me that you once had heard from your father, who had it from his father, that your great-grandfather, in the time when this castle was beleaguered by the Emperor Conrad,* buried a vast treasure in some part of it, but which part his

* A. D. 1025.

sudden death prevented him from communicating to his successor?"

The count nodded acquiescence. "It is even so," he said.

"In Eastern lands, have I learned how to discover where concealed treasures lie hidden," pursued the pilgrim; "and ——"

The count grasped him by the hand.

"Find them," he cried; "find them for me, and a full half is thine! Oh, there is gold, and there are diamonds, and there are all kinds of precious stones besides:— they are there in abundance. My father said so — 'tis true, 'tis true! Find them, find them, and then shall this old hall ring once more with the joyous voice of merriment! Then shall we live! ay, we shall live! that we shall!"

The pilgrim did not attempt to interrupt his ecstasies, or to interpose between him and the excess of his glee; but he let him excite himself to the highest pitch, with pictures of the pleasing future, until they had acquired almost the complexion of fact, and the truth of reality, for his distempered imagination. When he had exhausted himself, the wily tempter resumed:

"Oh, yes," he went on, "I know it all; I know all about it. I know where the treasure is, too. I can put your finger on it—if I like. I was present when the old man buried it with his own hands in the ——"

"You present!" exclaimed Ulric, his hair standing on end with horror, for he had no doubts of the truth of the mysterious stranger's statement. "You present! You! ——"

"Yes," resumed the pilgrim, quietly; "I was present."

"But he is full a hundred years dead and buried!" continued the count.

"No matter for that—no matter for that," replied his guest, abruptly; "many and many a time have we drank, and feasted, and revelled together, in this vault—ay, in this very vault!"

The count knew not what to think; still less did he know what to say to this piece of information. He could not fail to perceive its improbability, drunk as he was, but still he could not, for the life of him, discredit it.

"But," added the pilgrim, "trouble yourself not at present with that which you have not now the power to com-

prehend, and speculate not on my proceedings; but list to my words, and follow my counsel, if you will that I should serve you in the matter."

The count was silent while the stranger proceeded.

"This is Walpurgis night," he said; "all the spirits of earth, and sea, and sky, are now abroad, on their way to the Brocken. Hell is broke loose, you know, for its annual orgies on that famous mountain. When the castle clock tolls twelve, go you into the chapel, and proceed to the graves of your grandfather, your great-grandfather, and your great-great-grandfather; take from their coffins the bones of their skeletons—take them all, mind ye. One by one you must then remove them into the moon-light, outside the walls of the sacred edifice, and there lay them softly on the bit of green sward which faces the south. This done, you must next place them in the order in which they lay in their last resting-place. When you have completed that task, you must then return to the chapel; and, in the vacated coffins of your forefathers, you will find the treasures you seek. No one has power over an atom of it, until the bones of those who in spirit keep watch and ward over it shall have been removed from its guardianship; so long as they rest on it, or oversee it, to the dead it belongs—it belongs alone to the dead. Oh, but it is a glorious prize to win! 'Twill be the making of you, man, for ever!"

Ulric was deeply shocked at this unholy proposal; to desecrate the graves of his fathers, was a thought that made him shudder: and, bad as he was, the idea gave him the greatest horror, though the temptation was one wellnigh irresistible to his degraded habits and overclouded mind. But what will not poverty, acting on evil passions, make a man do? What can be expected from vice and misery conjoined together, as they were in the case of this hapless young man?

At the solemn hour of midnight, he proceeded to the castle chapel, accompanied by the pilgrim. He entered the holy place with fear and trembling; for his heart misgave him, though he knew not why. The pilgrim stayed without the threshold of the holy pile, apparently anxious and uneasy as to the result of the experiment about to be made by his victim. To all the solicitations of the count for assistance in the disgusting task

he had undertaken, he only turned a deaf ear; nothing which that misguided youth said, could induce him to set foot within the walls of the sacred edifice.

Ulric opened the graves in the order in which they were situated, beginning with the first from the door of the chapel. This done, he proceeded to remove the rotting remains of his ancestors from their mouldering coffins. One by one did he bear their bleached bones into the open air, as he had been instructed, and there place them as they lay in their narrow beds—under the pale moonbeams, on the plot of green sward facing the south, outside the chapel walls. The coffins were all cleared of their tenants, except one which stood next to the altar, at the upper end of the aisle. Ulric approached this, also, to perform the wretched task he had set himself: the thoughts of the treasure he should find, but faintly sustained his sinking soul in the fearful operation. Removing the lid of this last resting-place of poor mortality, his heart almost failed him at the sight he beheld. There lay extended, as if in a deep sleep, the corpse of a fair child, fresh and comely as though it still felt, and breathed, and had lusty being. It was his father's eldest son; his own once beloved brother, ravished from an afflicted sire and a despairing mother, in earliest youth—but not before he had won the love of all his family. The weakness he felt was, however, but momentary: his companion called aloud to him to finish his task quickly, or the hour would have passed when his labour would avail him. As he touched the corpse of the infant, lo and behold! the body stirred as if it still retained sensation. He shrunk back in horror and affright from the scene which ensued. The fair boy rose gently from the coffin; in a few moments more, he stood upright within it.

“Bring back yon bones!” said the phantom babe in a hollow voice, which sounded in the ears of the sacrilegious spoiler of the dead, like thunder amidst the mountains. “Bring back yon bones!” proceeded the child; “let them rest in peace in the last home of our fathers. The curse of the dead will be on you otherwise. Back! back! bring them back, ere it be too late.”

The infant corpse sunk down in the coffin again, as he uttered these words; and as Ulric's eyes involuntarily fell on that receptacle for the dead, to his horror he saw a skeleton

lying in his place. Shuddering, he averted his gaze, and turned it towards the chapel-door, where he had left his companion. But, oh! horror upon horror! As he looked, he saw the long, loose, dark outer garment fall from the limbs of the pilgrim: he saw his form dilate and expand in height and in breadth, until his head seemed to touch the pale crescent moon, and his bulk shut out from view all beyond itself: he saw his eyes fiery and flaming like globes of lurid light: and he saw his hair and beard converted into one mass of living, scorching flame. The fiend, for such he was, now stood revealed in all his hideous deformity.

The long, crooked claws of the demon were stretched forth to fasten and seize on the hapless count, who with vacillating step, like a bird under the eye of a basilisk, involuntarily, though with a perfect consciousness of the awful situation in which he was placed, and the fearful fate which awaited him, every moment drew near and nearer to him. The victim reached the chapel-door—he felt all the power of that diabolical fascination—another step, and he would be in the grasp of the fiend who grinned to clutch him. But the fair boy that spake from the grave suddenly appeared once more, and flinging himself between his wretched brother and the doorway, obstructed his further progress forward.

“Avaunt! foul fiend!” spake the child aloud. His voice was like a trumpet-note. “Avaunt to hell! My brother is no more thine. Thou hast no longer power over him. Your hellish plot has failed. He is free, and he shall live and repent!”

As he said this, he clasped Ulric in his little arms; and they became, as it were, at once encircled by a beatific halo, which lighted up the chapel like day. The fiend fled howling like a wild beast disappointed of his prey.

The remains of his ancestors were again replaced in their coffins by the count, long ere the morning; and on their desecrated graves he poured forth a bitter flood of repentant tears. With the dawn of the day he quitted the Castle of Rheineck, and never more entered it during his lifetime. It is said that he traversed the land in the garb of a lowly mendicant, subsisting upon the alms of the charitable and the kind; and it is likewise told that he did penance at every holy shrine from Cologne

TANNEERSTEIN.

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to Rome, whither he was bound to obtain absolution for his sins from the father of the Christian world. Years afterwards he was found dead at the foot of the ancient altar, in the ruined chapel of this his paternal abode. The castle went to wreck and ruin from thenceforward; and for centuries nought ever dwelt within its walls save and except the nightbirds and beasts of prey which frequented the adjacent forests.

The castle was rebuilt by a new race of possessors, into whose hands it passed after the lapse of time; the ruins of the old tower, already alluded to, are all that remain of the original structure. It is still firmly believed by the peasantry of the vicinity, that in the first and last quarters of the moon, when her pale beams fall faintly on these fragments of the past, the spirit of Ulric, the last of the old Lords of Rheineck, still sweeps around them at the hour of midnight, and is occasionally visible to belated wanderers.

HAMMERSTEIN.

Hammerstein, supposed by some antiquarians to derive its name from its presumed founder, Charles Martel (the Hammer); by others, from certain forges or iron-works (Eisenhammer) in its vicinity, is of very great antiquity—a fact which these conjectures in themselves would be amply sufficient to establish. Of its early history, however, little is known; and the most remarkable circumstance connected with it in the middle ages is the siege it sustained in the year 1020. The particulars of that siege are rather romantic, and not by any means uninteresting.

Otho, count of Hammerstein, the head of his noble race, was lord of this strong castle and of the large possessions appertaining to it, about the beginning of the eleventh century. He likewise owned the Wetterau, which impinged upon the territories of the Archbishop of Mainz, and was thereby the cause of continual feud between him and Erkenbold, the prelate who then ruled over that powerful see. The archbishop put forward pretensions to a portion of the

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LAACH.

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Wetterau, which the count repelled, after the manner of the period, by making occasional incursions into the dominions of his spiritual antagonist. Thus stood matters between them for some time. As Master Slender says in the play, "There was no great love in the beginning, and it pleased Heaven to decrease it upon better acquaintance." But though the prelate was no match for his more warlike foe in the field, he was more than his master in the cunning so peculiar to the clerical profession; and patiently did he wait and watch for his foe, like a spider in his web, until he came within the compass of his toils, that he might strangle and destroy him in his deadly embrace. Otho was not long in giving him the opportunity he desired, for while their feud was at the fiercest, he married the beautiful Irmengarde, his own first cousin. Nothing could be better adapted for the archbishop's purpose than this marriage; nothing could more effectually favour his designs of vengeance on his rival. At that era of ignorance the laws of the church were looked upon as the laws of God, and perhaps were reckoned more sacred, in consequence of the power possessed by the clergy to enforce them: this union was in direct contravention of one of them—of that portion of the ecclesiastical canons which forbids intermarriage between the children of brothers, or of sister and brother: and it was not long, therefore, until the vigilant and revengeful prelate fulminated an excommunication against the count, his enemy, and placed him under the ban of the church. The conditions imposed upon him were, the divorce of his young and lovely bride; and the performance of public penance for his sin: and he was informed that all reconciliation with the church was hopeless, until he had accomplished both. But Otho was not to be frightened even by an excommunication, fearful as it then was in its effects, and terrible to think upon; nor was the ecclesiastical power, though wellnigh omnipotent at that period, sufficient to dis sever him from his adored wife. He set the church and its agents at nought; and, being a good master, and greatly beloved by his vassals, he continued to live on as before; caring little for the estranged bearing of his neighbours and former friends, and less, still, for the objurgation of his clerical foe; satisfied with the affection of his Irmengarde, and confident in the fidelity of his

trusty retainers. He was not, however, altogether unmindful of his enemy's movements, nor slow to avenge his own wrongs, when an occasion presented itself to that effect. On one occasion, learning that the archbishop was to pass down the Rhine to Cologne, incognito, he waylaid the bark in which he sailed, slew many of his followers, and nearly succeeded in making him a prisoner. It was, indeed, with much difficulty, and at the risk of great danger, that the prelate escaped from his pursuit.

The animosity of the priest was not likely to be at all appeased by this attempt upon his person; on the contrary, it was, naturally, very much increased. The consequence was, that through the influence and exertions of Erkenbold, a provincial synod was convened at Nymuegen, and there, under his auspices, the marriage of Count Otho with his fair cousin was declared null and void, and of no force or validity. This decision was then despatched to the Emperor Henry the Second for his sanction; and to "make assurance doubly sure," the Archbishop of Mainz himself was the bearer of the document.

Henry the Second, Emperor of Germany, better known by the epithet of "the Pious," was one of those anomalous individuals, happily for the world so rare, who make marital chastity a virtue, and pride themselves on being without sexual passion. He made it a matter of boast at the end of his long and troubled life, that his wife had died a virgin in so far as he was concerned; and he had the audacity or the folly to hope that such a sacrifice gave him a greater claim on Heaven. He had also made no less than three journeys, at the head of large armies, over the Alps, in support of the regnant pope, Benedict the Eighth, for which his most coveted reward was the epithet of "Pious" appended to his name, and the solemn promise of that prelate to consecrate the Cathedral of Bamberg, recently erected by the emperor in person,—a promise, by the way, which the wily priest, for some reason or another, never performed. It is not to be supposed that the decree of a synod, in such a case as this—the intermarriage of cousins, under the ban of the church, would meet with opposition from such a monarch; nor did it. On the contrary, he freely and fully confirmed it; and, in a brief space, finding that Otho was heedless of his order to separate from his wife, he led the forces of the empire against

him in person. In the year 1020, Hammerstein was, accordingly, beleaguered by the emperor himself with a large force under his command, and, after a long siege, reduced to submission by hunger alone. Otho then formally put away his wife, having no other alternative to avail himself of; but a separation never took place between them, notwithstanding this formal act of divorce. For many years subsequently they lived together in peace and in the purest harmony. Their only son was the last of the Salique stock, who possessed the Castle of Hammerstein and the estates of his ancestors. On the death and extinction of that noble family, Hammerstein reverted to the emperor (Conrad the Second), or, rather, to the empire, of which it had previously been held in feu; and by that prince it was first presented to the Archbishop of Cologne, and subsequently to the Archbishop of Treves, as an appanage to their respective sovereignties.

Thus far all that is known of the very early history of this structure. Its subsequent history is, however, so closely connected with the personal adventures of one of the most unfortunate princes who ever wore an imperial crown, that it would be unpardonable to pass it over in silence.

THE EMPEROR HENRY THE FOURTH.

Perhaps the most memorable, certainly the most romantic, incident connected with the traditions of Hammerstein, is that passage in the life of the hapless Henry the Fourth, where he fled from the prison in which he had been immured by his unnatural son, and took refuge here with his old and faithful retainer, the then lord of this castle. As there will be occasion to allude more than once, in these pages, to the fate of that miserable monarch, it is not deemed irrelevant to this purpose, to shadow forth here a brief sketch of his vexed and troubled career.

Henry the Fourth succeeded his father, Henry the Third, as Emperor of Germany, in the sixth year of his age, A.D. 1056. For some time after his accession to the throne, he remained under the guardianship of his mother Agnes, of Guienne; and during that period she governed the empire as regent, in his name. But the weak arm of a woman, imperfectly fortified with power, was quite insufficient to control the fierce spirit of

misrule, which the strong hand of his predecessor had subdued, but not extinguished; the empire in the few early years of her administration became a prey to civil commotion of the worst kind; and peace and order were blessings no longer known, and but partially remembered by the mass of the suffering community. The nobility, almost to a man, were up and in arms for what they termed their rights; the clergy clamoured loudly for their own aggrandisement, under pretence of strengthening the church; and the peasants waged a destructive servile war with all those above them, because they were left to the ravages of both parties, and were unprotected by any, in the general disorganisation of society which ensued. To add to the confusion, Hanno, Archbishop of Cologne, and Adelbert, Bishop of Bremen, contrived to possess themselves of the young prince's person; and then compelled his heart-broken mother, not alone to relinquish all claim to her youthful charge, but also to end her days in a nunnery. This was the stratagem they used to effect the object. Their emperor resided at this period in the town of Kaiserwörth, in the duchy of Cleves, on the Lower Rhine. Hanno, whose territory lay contiguous, persuaded the youthful prince and his mother to join in a pleasure-party on the river. When he had insensibly drawn them into an ambush, especially laid for the purpose, he made the signal agreed on between him and his confederate, Adelbert; the latter speedily put out into the stream with such an armed force as rendered resistance useless, and mastering the empress's attendants, seized on the person of the infant prince, and bore him away with them. Such was the inauspicious commencement of Henry's reign; the sequel, it will now be seen, was not more fortunate for him.

Three years did he remain nominally the pupil, but in reality the prisoner, of these proud and ambitious prelates; at the end of that period, he was introduced to the electors of the empire, in a full diet convoked at Worms, and there declared to have attained his majority; at the same time he was solemnly proclaimed Emperor of Germany. Immediately after his coronation at Frankfort, he took into his own hands the reins of government. He had just then attained his fifteenth year (A.D. 1065). But although he appeared to rule by himself, and of his own will alone, he was notwithstanding only the mere agent of

others, who prompted all his actions: these were his late tutors, the Archbishop of Cologne and the Bishop of Bremen. A course of the most unbounded sensuality, provided for him by these artful men during his boyhood, had totally enervated his mind for business or for glory; and as he approached the age of man, he seemed scarcely to possess the ordinary faculties—the common acuteness—the usual application even of a backward child. Still he was not without good natural gifts, and with a better education, he might have been an unexceptionable sovereign: but the poison of dissipation had taken such a deep root in his soul, that to eradicate it, would be almost to destroy him; and its virulence and intensity were every hour increased by the counsels of those whom he retained about him, more as ministers to his desires than honest advisers in matters of state. Among these imperial panders—for such they were in fact—the foremost was the Bishop of Bremen, the unprincipled Adelbert; he had successfully contrived by his suppleness and pliability to supplant his prouder and equally ambitious, but more stern and less yielding confederate, the Archbishop of Cologne. He now reigned omnipotent and sole over the empire, minister at once to the pleasures of the prince and the miseries of the people. It is recorded in the contemporary historians, that this disgrace to his sacred calling was accustomed to address the weak and youthful emperor thus, when any extravagance greater than another was in question, or when wickedness beyond the ordinary class and character was on the tapis:—“Go to! go to! Do what you list; have all that you can desire. Deny yourself nothing which may give you pleasure. Are you not emperor? and why should you possess the power and the means of enjoyment without using them to their fullest extent? Go! gratify your heart in every thing; only be careful that you die in the true faith of Christ. It were a folly to stint yourself in your pleasures; make the most of your youth.” These destructive counsels were effectively aided by the example of a favourite of the emperor’s, who scrupled not on all occasions personally to enforce them. This was the Count Werner, a young man of ancient and noble family, but of the most profligate habits. As there was now no longer an honest man left near the misguided monarch to

point out the madness of these proceedings, and their obvious impolicy, he was entirely governed by that vicious twain in every thing he did. In a short time the empire was thrown into the utmost confusion by the scandalous practices of the court, and its total dismemberment was speedily threatened. To gratify the cupidity, or pamper the vanity, of these powerful favourites, the spiritual and temporal dignities of the empire were either bestowed upon their infamous minions, or publicly put up for sale and barter; the estates of those nobles who were obnoxious to them were confiscated without even the show of legality, or the pretence of justice; the possessions of the inferior clergy were transferred in the same manner from the virtuous and irreproachable men who held them to the hands of others of an opposite character; the lands of the minor laics — the lesser proprietors of the soil — the free knights and small barons, were entered upon indiscriminately by government agents; and no man, whatever his quality or station, could, for a single moment, consider his property, his person, — nay, his life itself, — in safety. The consequences of such a fearful state of things were natural and obvious: troubles broke out in all parts of the empire; and Saxony, which had never been very favourable to the Salique dynasty, nor to the rule of that house, became the centre of a formidable conspiracy against the emperor. Acting under the advice of Adelbert, the misled monarch attempted force, where conciliation might have better succeeded; and under pretence of strengthening his power on the frontiers, he caused several strong castles to be erected in that duchy. These he garrisoned exclusively with his own creatures. It was not to be supposed that a brave and restless people like the Saxons, who considered themselves, as in point of fact they were, a great integral portion of the empire, and who even longed for independence of it, would submit to be treated as a conquered province; neither was it to be believed that the other kingdoms and principalities which then composed the Roman Empire, would look on calmly at such an encroachment on their common interests — such an innovation on their common liberty. Making the abuses of his favourites the ostensible motive of their disquietude, and skilfully mixing up therewith the emperor's ill treatment of his injured and exemplary wife, Bertha, the major part of the tributary princes and

chiefs of the state speedily arrayed themselves in open rebellion against his authority. At a convocation of these princes, held in Tribur, a small village on the Rhine above Mainz, a requisition was agreed to by them, and forthwith forwarded to Henry, insisting on his declaring Bertha Empress of Germany, on his abandoning the shameless debaucheries which disgraced his station and destroyed his influence, and on his finally rasing to the ground the strong castles he had erected in Saxony. This requisition, supported by a numerous army, and countenanced by the defection of his best friends, he had no means left of declining to accede to. Driven from his ancestral palace of Ingelheim, where his prime favourite, Count Werner, was slain by a prostitute, through a popular commotion, in which he found himself involved without aid or assistance to overcome it, he had no other alternative than to accept the conditions imposed on him by his subjects, and to obtain a peace at their hands at whatever price it might be purchased. Accordingly, he proceeded to Tribur, and there, in the midst of his rebellious feudatories, he solemnly subscribed to the terms they dictated. Bertha was declared empress, and installed mistress of his household; Adelbert was expelled the court, and banished to Bremen, his bishoprick, covered with every mark of opprobrium and disgrace; and the castles in Saxony, the favourite object of Henry's solicitude, were directed to be immediately demolished. The confederated princes then departed, each to his respective dominion, and the confederacy itself was at an end. But the last of these conditions—the demolition of the Saxon castles—was not complied with by Henry; he fancied that in them lay his strength; and he vainly thought that while he held them in his power, he had no cause to dread any popular commotion. Accordingly, when those who had held him in fear were dispersed, he proceeded at once to his favourite abode, the great fortress of Goslar; and there, confident in the resources he still possessed, or careless of the result, so he had ample means of sensual indulgence, he once more relapsed into those vicious courses which stained his early life, and still render his youthful reign a byword and a reproach in history. This imprudent proceeding on his part was the signal for another outbreak of rebellion: it was as the match to the combustible material; and the empire, from end to end, was

soon in one blaze. Saxony and Thuringia leagued together in the same cause, forgetting for a period their private feuds; and raising a large army, they joined the confederates, and attacked and destroyed the obnoxious fortresses. After various successes, almost all of them disgraceful reverses, Henry was finally compelled to abandon Goslar, and flee to the Rhine.

For a little while he lived in narrow circumstances, in the ancient and loyal city of Worms; the archbishops of Mainz and Cologne meanwhile administering the government of the empire in his name, but without his concurrence. Among all his feudatories and subjects, he could only reckon on the honest support of two—the noble and powerful family of Hohenstaufen, a race whose loyalty had never been impeached, and the free cities on the Rhine, who looked up to the emperor as their special protector from the predatory nobles, their neighbours; the rest had either abandoned him altogether, or held aloof in his need, to be guided by the course of events, or the issue of the pending quarrel. But these, as well as being the most faithful, were also the most effective of his few remaining friends; and by their aid he was soon in a condition to take the field once more against his enemies. At the head of a considerable force, organised and paid by the free cities, and composed, in great part, of their burghers, he marched upon Saxony; and in the battle of Unstrut, near Langensalza, he completely defeated the rebels, and broke up the confederacy. At their earnest solicitation, he granted them a peace; but he imposed on them the severest conditions. This done, he returned to the Rhine in triumph; and then, apparently in the possession of as absolute and uncontrolled a power as his father, he named his eldest son, Conrad, his successor in the empire.

But while he was thus busied with his enemies at home, he altogether neglected a much more formidable foe who threatened him from abroad. This was no other than the famous Hildebrand, of Clugni, who then filled the papal chair under the title of Gregory the Seventh. A brief anticipatory narrative of the causes which led to the feud between them will not be misplaced here, as the subsequent pages refer, principally, to its consequences.

Previous to the pontificate of Nicholas the Second, and up

to the period of his assuming the triple crown, it was admitted to be an undoubted right inherent in the emperors of Germany* to ratify and affirm the election of each pope. That pontiff, however, among other changes which he effected in the mode of appointment to the papacy, virtually abolished this prerogative by his famous edict, A.D. 1059, published while the unfortunate subject of this memoir, Henry the Fourth, was in his minority.† This encroachment on the imperial rights was not, however, permitted to pass unheeded by Agnes, his mother; for, on the death of Nicholas, and the election of Anselm, bishop of Lucca, his successor to the papal throne, under the name of Alexander the Second, without her consent, she called a council at Basil, and there solemnly deposed that prelate by declaring his election null and void, raising to the pontifical dignity Cadolaus, Bishop of Parma, by the title of Honorius the Second (A.D. 1068). A long and furious contention ensued, which ended, however, in the triumph of Alexander and the defeat of Agnes. The seeds of discord between the emperors and the papal see thus sown, the bitter fruits which might be easily anticipated were not slow in ripening. Gregory the Seventh succeeded to Alexander the Second, with the entire consent of the emperor, Henry the Fourth, then in his full authority—a consent which he had reason to repent of during every subsequent hour of his chequered and wretched existence. One of the first objects of this proud and turbulent prelate was

* A slight anachronism is observable here. It also pervades many other parts of these pages; to wit, styling the kings of Germany, who were also kings of the Romans, emperors. The title of emperor was not taken until 1508, when Maximilian the First assumed it; but as it is the more generally recognised one, it is here adopted.

† This famous document is found to differ in various copies; in some it appears to be favourable to the rights and privileges of the Roman emperors; in others it seems to have a contrary tendency: while there is a most puzzling discrepancy in the varying extent to which it runs in the pages of the respective authors who have quoted it. The most ample copies are to be met with in Muratori's *Scrip. Rer. Ital.*, in Baluze's *Miscell.*, and in the *Concilia*. The plans and projects of Nicholas, however, bear out the interpretation put upon this act, that his intention was to destroy the imperial influence in the church, and to secure to himself and his successors a complete independence of the empire.

to effect a thorough reformation in the ecclesiastical condition. His various attempts to render all the princes and potentates of Europe vassals of the see of Rome, are passed by at present as irrelevant to the immediate subject-matter of this rapid sketch. At this period the clergy were corrupt beyond measure: profligacy, open and unconcealed, marked the proceedings of the great majority of priests—adultery and fornication were avowedly practised—the crime of simony was publicly perpetrated: the truth and beauty of religion were wholly defaced by the enormous vices of her ministers. To remedy this most deplorable state of things, was the first effort of Gregory's pontificate. He called a general council at Rome, A.D. 1074, for the avowed purpose of effecting a radical reformation in the discipline of the church; and there reviving all the former edicts against these clerical sins, he launched the thunder of the church on the heads of offenders of all grades, and in every direction.* Not content with this bold act, however, he sent legates to the courts of the several monarchs of Europe, requiring them to call provincial synods, for the purpose of enforcing his edicts in their respective dominions; and, among others, he despatched one to the court of his feudal sovereign, Henry the Fourth. But though Henry received the messenger graciously, and appeared altogether to approve of the object of his mission, he soon proved himself by his subsequent acts to be quite averse to these proceedings, and by no means anxious to comply with the papal requisition. In truth, he was too deeply involved in simoniacal practices himself, and his bishops and the superior clergy of the empire were too foully tainted with the vices of concubinage and adultery, to countenance the execution of any such project as that of the

* The tumults excited by this act of Gregory, among those of the spiritual condition, would be incredible, were they not so well authenticated as to place them beyond all doubt. The greater part of the clergy refused to discard their mistresses; some of them were the fathers of large families by these women; and custom, however corrupt, had long sanctioned the intercourse. In Germany, seditions were set on foot by the priests so circumstanced—the Gallic and Belgic provinces were convulsed, from one extremity to the other, through clerical machinations—Italy, more particularly the Milanese, became a prey to the worst kind of commotion, domestic disturbance—and even England, notwithstanding its insular position, was not exempt from the evil influence of the godless lives of the clergy.

pope. After some delay, he declined to accede to the proposition ; and he dismissed the legate shortly after, thus depriving him of every opportunity of effecting his purpose. Exasperated at the ill success of his efforts in Germany, Gregory called another council at Rome (A.D. 1075) the following year ; and there he not only set on foot the same project with increased vigour and perseverance, but he also succeeded in obtaining the consent of the council to a sentence of excommunication against several bishops in Germany and Italy, and against some of the emperor's lay favourites. A further and more important act of this council, however, was the power conferred on the pope himself of pronouncing anathema on any of the clerical profession who should thenceforward receive the investiture "by ring and staff" of any bishoprick, abbacy, or other ecclesiastical dignity, from the hands of a layman, as well as on any layman, whatever his quality or condition, conferring any such dignity or granting any such investiture in such manner. This decree was the origin of the quarrel respecting "investiture,"* which caused so much dissension in Europe during succeeding ages. Striking, as it did, at the very foundation of his authority over the clerical state, it is not to be wondered at if Henry, sunk though he was in sensuality, and weakened in intellect by his manifold excesses, was not altogether insensible to its effects. But he was impotent to resist it at the time, and wholly powerless to assert his prerogative, because of the civil strife which then desolated the empire, and divided the hearts of his subjects. When, however, he had succeeded in bringing about a peace, by his defeat of the Saxons, he turned his awakened attention immediately to it. That there was ample ground for some such severe law as that proposed by the pope, could not be denied by him ; neither did he seek to gainsay its necessity. On the contrary, "he acknowledged," says an honest historian of the church,† "that in exposing ecclesiastical benefices to sale he had done amiss, and he promised amendment in that respect ; but he remained

* By "investiture" is meant a formal donation of the episcopal ornaments or symbols — the ring and crozier, or staff — without which ceremony no bishop or abbot was considered regularly installed into any ecclesiastical dignity.

† Mosheim, *Eccl. Hist.* cent. xi. cap. ii. s. xv.

inflexible against all attempts that were made to persuade him to resign his power of creating bishops and abbots, and the right of investiture, which was intimately connected with this important privilege. Had this emperor," continues the same author, "been seconded by the German princes, he might have maintained the refusal with dignity and success; but this was far from being the case: a considerable number of these princes, and, among others, the states of Saxony, were the secret or declared enemies of Henry, and this furnished Gregory with a favourable opportunity of extending his authority and executing his ambitious projects." But a more detailed account of this eventful quarrel is necessary to the better understanding of what follows.

The latter part of the year 1075 was signalised by the death of Hanno the Second, Archbishop of Cologne, previously the emperor's tutor, and subsequently his mediator with the papal see. According to the custom which had prevailed during his sovereignty, Henry, without consulting the canons of the diocese in whom lay the election, and without intimating his intention to the papal legate, who was then at his court prosecuting the claim of the Roman pontiff to the sole power of investiture, proceeded to appoint a successor to the defunct prelate. This most important see he conferred on one of his most worthless favourites; and not content even with that, he added to it the rich and powerful abbacies of Fulda, in Westphalia, and Lorsch, in the Palatinate. To complete his folly, he then invested the newly appointed prelate with ring and staff himself, in the presence of the papal legate. This act had at once the effect of disgusting his subjects, and of exciting the pope against him; and thus he created enemies for himself at home and abroad, and in every quarter, when he most needed friendship and peace. The dispossessed abbots of Fulda and Lorsch laid their cases before the papal throne, and they were gladly entertained by Gregory, who was anxious for an opportunity of attacking his great rival, Henry; but they were also backed by the complaints, loud and deep, of the dispersed confederates, who now began to stir again in all corners of the kingdom, and acquired by that means a weight which was wellnigh irresistible in the opinion of the wily pope. To the discontented

nobles were speedily joined the still unquiet Saxons, and another formidable conspiracy was soon set on foot against the imperial power. The emperor was assailed with the bitterest denunciations—the mildest epithets applied to him by his incensed subjects were, “perjurer,” “tyrant,” and “sacrilegious plunderer of the church;” and the most outrageous interpretation was put upon every one of his actions, even those of the most harmless description. Thus stood matters at the inauspicious commencement of the following year, A.D. 1076.

In the meanwhile, Gregory had determined upon the course to pursue, and in pursuance of that determination he took the boldest and most extraordinary step which had ever till then been attempted by the papal power. This was no other than to issue the citation to Henry to attend in person at Rome, for the purpose of exculpating himself from the charges already alluded to. Up to that period the popes had ever been deemed the vassals of the emperor; and they were so in practice as well as in theory. By this bold proceeding, however, the theory was sought to be reversed, and thenceforth the contrary practice established, that the temporal sovereignty was held entirely at the will of the head of the church. The words of the enraged Gregory, on learning that Henry refused to accede to his claims, are characteristic of the inflexible temper of the man, as well as of the persevering violence which characterised his conduct in these proceedings, even to the very hour of his death. — “Either,” he said to his council, “either shall this Henry lose his crown, or I my life!” Both circumstances occurred in this bitter contest.

“On the Monday of the second week in Lent, this year of our Lord 1076,”—thus ran Gregory’s citation, communicated to the monarch by his legate,—“you, Henry of Franconia, now King of the Romans, shall appear before us in a special synod to be held in Rome, to hear the charges preferred against you, and to exculpate yourself therefrom. Failing in this, be it known to you by these presents, that the apostolical curse shall be pronounced against you—that you shall be cut off from all communion with the Christian church—that you shall be put out of the pale of humanity—that you shall be anathema, maranatha.”

It was only natural that Henry should be enraged at this

impudent threat, and that he should at once proceed to repel the pretensions of his proud vassal. Accordingly he convened a general council of the church at Worms, on his own authority, and appointed to the presidency thereof Siegfried, Archbishop of Mainz, Gregory's bitterest enemy. This council was well attended; for the German clergy, actuated by a spirit of nationality, and perhaps also excited against the pope by reason of the severe discipline which he sought to introduce into the church, were, almost to a man, adverse to his proceedings. All those archbishops and bishops who had been threatened with deposition by Gregory, either for their scandalous lives, or for their simoniacal practices; all those prelates and abbots who were in the enjoyment of ill-got benefices, or who lived in a state of open concubinage with women; all those of the superior clergy, who feared the emperor's displeasure, or expected the reward of subserviency, failed not to be present at it.

While this council sat, even in the very first days of their convocation, a certain priest, named Hugo Blancus, appeared before them, and entered on a long series of the most atrocious accusations against Gregory. He charged him with heresy, with perjury, with regicide; he accused him of simony, of magic, and of altering, to suit his own purposes, the text of the Holy Scriptures; he undertook to prove him guilty of falsely prophesying, of persecution, and of treason to the church; and these grave charges were not only listened to, but eagerly entertained, by the assembled fathers. It is, however, but justice to Gregory to state, that his accuser had been some time previously excommunicated by him for scandalous practices. Ostensibly, on the strength of these accusations, though in reality at the instigation of Henry, and in pursuance of an organised plan to defeat the papal pretensions, the council proceeded to excommunicate Gregory, to depose him from the papal throne, and to issue a rescript for the election of another pontiff.

The sentence of the council was then despatched to Rome; and a requisition from the emperor accompanied it, that Gregory should submit at once, or prepare to receive the condign punishment of his refractoriness. The bearer of these despatches was an Italian priest named Roland; and he fearlessly presented them to Gregory in the presence of the synod which had been

called by him for the trial of Henry. Such, however, was the excitement produced in that reverend assembly by their perusal, that the pope had great difficulty in saving his life from the fury of the enraged prelates who composed it. The letter of Henry has been preserved; it is characteristic of the man and of the times.

“ Henry, not by violence nor presumption, but by the grace of God and the holy ordinance, king, to Hildebrand, not the pope, but the false monk.

“ This greeting hast thou deserved, through thy arrogance and thy errors, for thou hast left no condition in the church undebased—no state, however humble, untouched with thy accursed intermeddling. We would discuss with thee various weighty matters. To win the applause of the common people, hast thou not only unrighteously attacked and attempted to degrade the heads of the church—the archbishops, the bishops, and the priests—the Lord’s anointed, but thou hast also treated them as thy serfs, as though they knew not the Lord’s word as well as thee, and tried to trample them under thy feet. Thou affectest to believe that they know nought, that thou knowest all; and thou hast dared to act accordingly. But thy knowledge has been used, not in the work of edification, but in the work of destruction. The holy Gregory, whose name thou hast so arrogantly assumed, rightly presaged of thee, when he spoke these memorable words: ‘ through the submission of the disciple is the pride of the master made great; for he thinks he knows all, when he sees that he may do every thing he desires.’ We have endured much at thy hands, that the honour due to the holy Roman church might not to be denied it, nor the reverence which all Christians owe to it be withheld. But thou hast held our magnanimity to be the fear of thy power; thou hast ventured to raise thy rebellious voice against us whom God has appointed his vicegerent over our people; and thou hast even most audaciously dared to threaten to drive us from our throne, and dispossess us of our crown, as if our kingdom and state were in thine, and not in God’s own hand, and as if thou wert not called to the high priesthood, as we have been called to the sovereignty of this realm, solely through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord. Thou hast thus reached the last degree of

treachery and treason; and therefore by every law, divine and human, art thou accursed. Good-will hast thou won by gold; by good-will thou hast acquired power; by power hast thou possessed thyself of the throne of peace, from which thy first act has been to hurl peace down: thou hast armed our subjects against our rightful authority; thou hast excited them to contempt and scorn of their pious instructors—our well-beloved prelates and priests, appointed by God to teach his word; and thou hast deprived even the laity, whom thou affectest to serve, of all voice in the election of their ecclesiastical conductors. Even we, all unworthy as we are, but still by the grace of God the Lord's highest anointed, hast thou presumed to touch, and claimed to judge, though the words of the holy fathers expressly say, that to God only are we responsible for our actions; that he alone is our Judge in all temporal things; and that, for no other than a departure from the true faith of Christ, may our sovereignty be infringed upon, or our sacred person profaned. Yea, even for that crime, is it doubtful whether we may be punished; for did not the fathers of the church decline to depose the apostate Emperor Julian, and leave his punishment entirely to the justice of Heaven? The blessed Leo, a true pope, says thereon, 'Fear God, and honour the king.' But thou neither fearest the Lord, nor doth honour his anointed. Descend thou then,—thou with curses laden,—thou anathematised and excommunicate of our pious prelates in solemn council assembled—descend thou then at once from thy usurped dignity, and vacate, without delay, the throne of the prince of the apostles. Another shall occupy thy place—one who will not make of our holy faith a cloak for his ambition, his turbulence, and his profligacy; one who will teach to the Christian world the true doctrines of the holy St. Peter. We, Henry, by the grace of God, king, and all our archbishops, bishops, abbots, and other ecclesiastical dignitaries, bid thee descend from that throne—descend! descend!"

On the following day, at the first meeting of the council, Gregory's answer was given to the ambassador of Henry. It was a sentence of excommunication, by which that monarch was not only cut off from all Christian communion, but by which, also, all his subjects, of every grade and condition, were released

from their allegiance to him. This *brutum fulmen* has also been preserved, as well as the preceding ; and it is equally characteristic of the period and of the priest who launched it.

“ Holy Peter ! ” thus it began ; “ prince of the apostles, graciously incline thine ear to us, we pray thee, and listen to me, thy servant, whom from childhood to this time thou hast cherished, and from the hands of the godless preserved, who hated me for the fealty I bore to thee, and who still hate me for the same deep devotion ! Thou art my witness, and the mother of God, and St. Paul, thy brother and co-peer among the princes of heaven, that thy church—the holy Roman church—against my own desire, hath raised me up to its governance : that I have never held it in the light of an object for my personal advantage, to sit in thy sacred seat ; and that I would much prefer to end my life in exile and in misery, than for worldly purposes, or through vain-glory, to assume the functions of thy successor. Through thy favour and great grace, and not for my merits, do I believe that it hath pleased thee to place me over the Christian church—to make me the shepherd of the flock intrusted to thy care—to make that flock obedient to my behests : through thee only do I inherit, from heaven, the power conferred on thee by Christ, to bind and to loose from sin the soul of man. Supported by this firm belief, and acting on my consciousness of thy approval, I do hereby, and from henceforward and hereafter for ever, for the honour and safety of thy church, in the name of the Triune and only God—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost—and in behalf of thy glory and dignity, interdict, excommunicate, and anathematise Henry the king, son and successor of Henry the emperor, who hath rebelled against thy power, and set at nought thy authority ; and by these he is interdict, excommunicate, anathematised, and expelled from the government of the holy Roman empire, in Germany, in France, and in Italy ; his subjects, of every class and condition, absolved from their allegiance to him ; his family dissevered from all natural ties ; and, as king and as father, all further obedience and duty to be withheld from him. For it is only right and just, meet and proper, that whoso assails thee, should himself be destroyed—who depreciates thy honour, should be deprived altogether of his own. And since he, the said Henry, hath

obeyed not, as a Christian he was bound to do, thy behests, whereof I am the humble organ, and returned not again to the fold of the Lord, which he hath so shamefully abandoned; but, on the contrary, hath only strayed all the more widely from its precincts, keeping up companionship with other hapless men, accursed of the church, and cut off from her holy communion, heeding not my solemn admonitions, slighting the repeated warnings which I gave him, and, as thou art a witness, despising in me thy sanctity, and seeking to separate himself wholly from the true church; so, by that power which thou hast endowed me with as thy successor, and which thou derivest and inheritest from heaven, here, in thy name and on thy behoof, do I bind him in the bonds of thy curse, and the curse of the holy church, to the end that all folk may know and see that thou art Peter; that the Son of the living God—the Saviour of the world—hath built his church on thee, as on a rock; and that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Be he therefore accursed, here and hereafter, now and for ever, world without end. Amen.”

A similar sentence was pronounced by the enraged pope upon Siegfried, Archbishop of Mainz, president of the council of Worms, and upon all the other archbishops, bishops, abbots, and inferior clergy who assisted at it.

This act of Gregory served as the signal for a general outbreak in all parts of Henry's dominions. There had long been a deep-rooted distaste to his rule; but, besides this, there was another cause equally potent, though latent and concealed, to stir up the chief nobility of the empire to rebellion against him. Heretofore, every man among them had had a chance of the empire for himself or his descendants, inasmuch as the imperial dignity was sometime elective: since the accession of the Salique dynasty, however, it had become hereditary; Conrad the Second being succeeded by his son, Henry the Third, the father of the hapless subject of this memoir, as a thing of course. It was mainly to bring about this ancient order of succession, so favourable to individual ambition and individual avarice, that the princes and nobles of Germany took advantage of the proclamation of the pope, and stood forth in arms against their sovereign; though it cannot be denied, that their ostensible

object was the advocacy of morals and good government, their ostensible motive the horror of anathema, and the affirmance of true religion. "We may perceive," says a well-informed modern historian,* alluding to the events which subsequently ensued; "we may perceive, in the conditions of Rodolph's election,† a symptom of the real principle that animated the German aristocracy against Henry IV. It was agreed, that the kingdom should no longer be hereditary, not conferred on the son of a reigning monarch, unless his merit should challenge the popular approbation. The pope strongly encouraged the plan of rendering the empire elective, by which he hoped either eventually to secure the nomination of its chief for the holy see, or at least, by sowing the seed of civil dissensions in Germany, to render Italy more independent."

Availing themselves of this crisis in the affairs of the emperor, the disaffected princes of the empire, joined with the defeated but not dispirited Saxons, accordingly; and revolting against his sovereignty and rule, they proceeded conditionally to depose him. That is to say, they proposed to refer the quarrel between them to the arbitration of the pope; Henry, in the meanwhile, agreeing to relinquish his dignity, and live in a private station for one year, in which period it was to be settled. If by the end of that time he should not succeed in obtaining a removal of the anathema, which was put forward as the promovent of the rebellion, it was then proposed that he should forfeit for ever his title to the empire, and give his unqualified assent to the election of another sovereign in his stead. "When things were come to this desperate extremity," proceeds Mosheim (who has been much followed in this part of his history by later writers, because of his perspicuousness and veracity), "and the faction which was formed against this unfortunate prince grew more formidable from day to day, his friends advised him to go into Italy, and implore, in person, the clemency of the pontiff. The emperor yielded to this ignominious counsel, without, however, obtaining from his voyage the advantages he expected. He passed the Alps amid the rigour of a severe

* Hallam's "View of the State of Europe during the Middle Ages," vol. ii. cap. v. p. 98.

† Treated of in the succeeding part of this narrative.

winter, arrived in the month of February, 1077, at the fortress of Canusium,* where the sanctimonious pontiff resided at that time with the young Matilda, countess of Tuscany, the most powerful patroness of the church, and the most tender and affectionate of all the spiritual daughters of Gregory.† Here the suppliant prince, unmindful of his dignity, stood, during three days, in the open air at the entrance of the fortress, with his feet bare, his head uncovered, and with no other raiment than a wretched piece of coarse woollen cloth thrown over his body to cover his nakedness. The fourth day he was admitted to the presence of the lordly pontiff, who, with a great deal of difficulty, granted him the absolution he demanded; but as to what regarded his restoration to the throne, he refused to determine that point before the approaching congress, at which he made Henry promise to appear, forbidding him at the same time to assume, during this interval, the title of king, as also to wear the ornaments, or exercise the functions, of royalty." ‡

These disgraceful conditions were acceded to by the humbled monarch: he had no other alternative, in the hapless state to which he was reduced; and the proud priest who imposed them was inexorable. But not so with his subjects and feudatories, the princes and bishops of Italy. Adverse to the pope, by reason of his severity in matters of ecclesiastical discipline, and availing themselves gladly of the temporal justification for revolt which his conduct to Henry presented, they complained loudly of the intolerable character of these proceedings, and secretly and openly urged that prince to resist them. In the meanwhile, the confederate rebels of Suabia and Saxony called a mock diet at Oppenheim, on the Rhine, in the month of March 1077, and there solemnly deposing Henry, elected their general-in-chief, Rodolph, duke of Suabia, Emperor of Germany, in his

* Canossa, or Canusium, was a strong castle in the Modenese, near Reggio, to which Gregory had fled in dismay, on the first rumour of Henry's arrival in Italy.

† Matilda, the greatest temporal benefactress the Roman church ever knew, was the daughter of Boniface, Duke of Tuscany, one of the most powerful of the great Italian princes at that period. "She found," says the historian in another part of his work, "that neither ambition nor grace had extinguished the tender passion in the heart of Gregory."—*Verbum sap.*

‡ "Ecclesiastical History," cent. xi. part ii. cap. 2, s. xvi.

stead.* This blow, which would seem to have entirely annihilated the wretched monarch, had, however, a totally opposite effect; thus proving the futility of all human calculations, which reject our best feelings—gratitude, sympathy, loyalty, and truth—from their elements. It aroused the friends of the emperor, and brought the enemies of the pope into full action. Most of the Italian potentates and many of the prelates at once sided with their lawful sovereign: the patriarch of Aquileja placed himself at the head of the clergy, who were opposed to this usurpation of the temporal power; and the dukes of Carinthia and Bavaria took the lead of the laymen who stood forth in aid and defence of Henry. The great mercantile cities of the empire, more especially those on the Rhine, likewise declared themselves in his favour, and exerted themselves strenuously in his behalf. By their united assistance he was enabled, in a short period, to raise a very considerable army, and to give his spiritual and temporal antagonists much trouble. While, however, matters were thus pending, the rebels in Germany were acquiring fresh strength every day, and adding largely to their reinforcements of men and munitions of war. To make their cause preponderate, Gregory threw the entire weight of the church into the scale: Rudolph was at once recognised by him as the lawful Emperor of Germany; the adherents of Henry were declared excommunicated; and the ban of excommunication was also revived against Henry himself. But that monarch was now in a condition to dread the papal anathema less than heretofore; and there existed no longer any cause to deter him from repelling it. Accordingly he deposed Gregory a second time, in a second council called by him at Mainz, and caused to be elected, in his stead, under the title of Clement the Third, Guibert, archbishop of Ravenna, one of his most faithful adherents (A.D. 1080.)

Fortune, of whom he had long been the sport and the scoff, seemed now tired, for a while, of persecuting this monarch; nay, with the fickleness usually attributed to her sex, she seemed

* Gregory, who stimulated this illegal election, sent the anti-emperor a crown, with the following singular legend inscribed on it:—

“Petra dedit Petro—Petrus diadema Rhodolpho.”

inclined to favour him. After various successes with detached bodies of his opponents, he met and defeated their united forces in a general battle, fought at Wochsheim on the Elster (A.D. 1080). In that engagement his chief antagonist, Rudolph of Suabia, fell, covered with wounds, fighting in a manner worthy of a better cause;* and not long after, his successor in the chief command and the imperial dignity, Hermann, count of Luxemburg, voluntarily relinquished the usurped title he bore into the hands of its rightful owner. The empire now enjoyed a partial peace, and Henry had leisure to turn his attention to Italy and his arch enemy Gregory. At the head of a formidable army he once again crossed the Alps, and attacked Rome (A.D. 1082). Twice was he obliged to raise the siege of that city, by the valour of its defenders, and the bravery and conduct of the troops sent by the enthusiastic Countess Matilda to the succour of her friend; but the third and last attempt he directed against it completely succeeded, and he became once more sole master of "the mistress of the world."

The first step he took, after this success, was to place his nominee, Guibert, on the papal throne. This done, he received himself the imperial crown, at the hands of the new pontiff, and was publicly saluted king by the Roman people. The Empress Bertha was also crowned at the same time. He then proceeded to lay close siege to the mole of Adrian, or Castle of St. Angelo, where Gregory had taken refuge. Possession was soon obtained of this strong citadel; but it failed to secure him the person of his foe. The pope had succeeded in making his escape, before its surrender, to the court of Robert Guiscard, the Norman adventurer, then Duke of Apulia and Calabria.

Henry, however, was not long suffered to retain the peaceful possession of Rome. The active mind of Gregory was not at

* "In that engagement," says Vogt, "Rudolph, who was in the thick of the fight, lost, first his right hand, and then his life. In his dying moments he remarked to those around him, that it was with that hand he had sworn fealty to Henry. * * * The great bulk of the people, and more particularly those attached to Henry's party, saw, in this circumstance, God's judgment on perjury; and that belief was better than a victory for Henry's cause." — *Rhein. Gesch. u. Sagen*. b. i.

rest during the period of his banishment and his disgrace. Stimulated by the fugitive pope, his friend Robert Guiscard, placing himself at the head of his hardy troops, hastened to the rescue of the "eternal city." "Unfurling," says Gibbon,* "the holy banners, he resolved to fly to the relief of the prince of the apostles: the most numerous of his armies, six thousand horse and thirty thousand foot, were instantly assembled: and his march from Salerno to Rome was animated by the public applause and the promise of divine favour. Henry, invincible in sixty-six battles,† trembled at his approach; recollected some indispensable affairs that required his presence in Lombardy, exhorted the Romans to persevere in their allegiance, and hastily retreated, three days before the entrance of the Normans."

A few words will be sufficient to relate the events of this campaign, referring, as they do, but very remotely to the subject-matter of this memoir. The forces of the Norman prince, composed, in great part, of Sicilian Saracens, committed fearful outrages in Rome, and finally, through neglect or design, set fire to the city, previously sacking it; and Gregory, now hated by his own subjects as much as he was loved before, and unable any longer to live in safety, in a city which had been ravaged by his supporters, returned to Calabria with his friend, Robert Guiscard, and there died at Salerno, the following year, A.D. 1085.

The most eventful period of Henry's life now approached. Notwithstanding the death of his implacable foe Gregory, he was very far from being at peace with the church. Clement the Third, a mild man, was induced to abdicate the papal dignity, A.D. 1088; and his place was taken by Urban the Second, another monk of Clugni, who, without the redeeming genius of Gregory, had all his fierce pride, all his wrong-headed temerity, and all his insane ambition. The contest between the popes

* Hist. Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, cap. lvi.

† Where did the great historian learn this?—and is it the fact? It is much to be lamented that Gibbon, with all his undoubted learning, is not always so accurate as his ardent admirers could wish.

and the emperor respecting investitures, which had slumbered during Henry's success, was quickly revived, with all the rancour of clerical hate, and all the bitterness of religious animosity, the moment his affairs began again to assume an adverse appearance. To make the situation of his enemy as perilous as possible, the revengeful pontiff, aided by the young Welf, or Guelph, son of the duke of Bavaria, and husband of the Countess Matilda, excited and urged on Henry's eldest son, Conrad, to rebellion against him; and he was but too successful in his abominable efforts. A seven years' deadly war ensued between the partisans of both princes, which ended in a second invasion of Italy by Henry, and the discomfiture of Conrad, who, abandoned by all his adherents, and betrayed by those who had stimulated him to this unnatural act, died miserably at Florence some time after. In the meanwhile, the unfortunate monarch had declared his second son, Henry, his rightful successor in the empire; and he now lavished on him all the paternal affection which he was precluded, by the peculiar circumstances of his case, from bestowing on his elder brother. For a brief period subsequently, he lived in peace with his subjects and his neighbours, and seemed, at least, to be happy. His ecclesiastical enemy was not, however, dead, but only sleeping. In fighting against the church, the hapless king had to contend with a foe that never forgives, and never allows the spirit of vengeance to expire until it is fully satiated. Paschal the Second, who succeeded Urban, was equally implacable as his predecessor, and equally unscrupulous as to the means he employed to effect his purposes. Undeterred by the ill success of Conrad, and, perhaps, anxious as much to wound the monarch in the most vital part, as to advance the interests of the church, he set about to seduce the second son of Henry from his allegiance, and ultimately succeeded in making him raise the standard of rebellion against his sovereign and his sire. In this infamous attempt he was abetted by Guelph, duke of Bavaria, who had formerly assisted his predecessor, Urban, to alienate the loyalty and affection of Conrad. Henry had borne up bravely against the defection of his eldest son; his spirit was buoyed by temporary prosperity in his undertakings against him; and the

result of the contest was, from the very onset, in his own hands: but this defection of his second child—of his best beloved son, too—was a blow from which he never after recovered, and which no subsequent events could cure. His heart sunk at the news; and he seemed from thenceforward a fated being. Although he made every necessary preparation to suppress this foul rebellion, he did so more at the instigation of his friends and followers than of his own free will: indeed, he appeared altogether careless or unconscious of what was going on around him; and never opened his lips to any one, but to lament the treachery of his son, as David did that of Absalom.

The remainder of his sorrowful history may be briefly related. It is a melancholy and touching tale of grief and suffering, of sorrow and of death. The unnatural contest continued, for some time, with various success; but the emperor, in the main, had the upperhand of his undutiful antagonist. His traitor son, dispirited by these adverse circumstances, soon desponded, and saw nothing but defeat in the present, disgrace, perhaps destruction, in the future. In this dilemma he had recourse to treachery of a still more damnable character than any that he had, even until then, thought of. Under pretence of contrition for his crime, he prayed his offended father to meet him at Coblenz, there to grant him peace and forgiveness. The unsuspecting Henry hastened thither with the speed of paternal affection; and a penitential scene was enacted by the hypocritical rebel in the presence of a plenar court. Pardon was prayed and accorded; and in a few days sire and son set out for Mainz, where an imperial diet, convoked for the occasion, was sitting to witness their meeting and their reconciliation. As they drew near to Bingen, it was intimated to the monarch by his son, that it might not be altogether safe for them to enter Mainz in company; and, acting on the counsel of this doubly-damned traitor, he unsuspectingly consented to take up his temporary abode in the strong castle of Klopp, which overlooks this town, until all should be made ready for his reception in that city. Thither he accordingly proceeded with a small retinue. He had, however, scarcely entered Bingen when he saw his few followers attacked and slaughtered before his

eyes, and found himself at once disarmed and made a close prisoner.* There he was detained then for some time in close durance, until the diet which he had himself convened to witness his reconciliation with his son was won round to favour the pretensions of that unnatural monster. From thence he was transferred to Ingelheim; and in that palace of his ancestors he was violently deposed, and deprived of the imperial insignia in favour of his unnatural successor. Five years did the miserable monarch pine in the prison of Klopp, to which he was sent back after his deposition; many times, it is said, wanting bread; at all times needing the ordinary comforts of life; wretched, heart-broken, and weary of his existence. At the end of that time, however, he managed to make his escape, and threw himself into the arms of the commercial cities on the Rhine, all of which still remained faithful to him. In his flight he took refuge in Hammerstein, a fact which gives rise to the following tradition. The honest burghers of Cologne received him with open arms, and entertained him with reverence and affection; by their powerful and unceasing efforts, aided by those of the other commercial and manufacturing places on the river, he was soon at the head of a formidable force. The Duke of Limburg, the Bishop of Liege, and various other princes and nobles of the empire, soon hastened to his assistance, seeing that he was enabled to take the field independently of their aid. But the fiat of his doom had gone forth: the ingratitude of his only child had fastened on his heart, and gnawed it until it was quite consumed; life to him appeared no longer worth living for, and the world gave him no more enjoyment. Before a blow was struck he was seized with his last mortal illness; and after lingering a few days in intense agony of mind and body, he died at Liege (A.D. 1106, 7th August). His last words were those of an affectionate father — his last breath exhaled to heaven in prayer as for his erring child. “If my son,” he spake to his chief officers, as the breath of life trembled on his lips, ready to pass away from them for ever; “if

* Vide “Klopp,” vol. ii. for a more detailed account of this treacherous proceeding.

my son falls into your hands, spare, oh! spare him! Spare him for my sake, that he may not be cut off in the flower of his age, and in the midst of his sins! Spare him! spare him!"

The unrelenting hatred of the church pursued him even after death: his remains, which had been transferred to the tombs of his ancestors in the cathedral of Speyers, were not suffered to rest in consecrated ground; and it was not until five years had elapsed from the period of his death that the ban of excommunication was removed, and they were permitted to repose in peace beside his imperial predecessors.

Henry the Fifth, his unnatural son, met with his deserts; the vengeance of an outraged Providence, though it may seem slow, is always sure. He lived a life of toil, and trouble, and strife, not alone with his own subjects, but with a still more formidable foe—the church. In fact, he never knew peace while he reigned. His friends fell off from him without apparent cause, and became by degrees his bitterest enemies; and he had repeatedly to sustain the papal denunciation for persevering in that opposition to its claims, which had cost his father his crown and his life. He was certainly feared, but he was also hated; he knew not what it was to love, or to be loved; and he died childless, friendless, solitary—the last of his race—unblessed, unwept, and unregretted (A.D. 1125).

THE FLIGHT.

The Lord of Hammerstein looked from his chamber window, in the twilight of a stormy winter's evening, on the troubled river which fretted and foamed below, and on the drear landscape around him;—but he saw not the rushing stream, he heard not the raging waters; the cheerless fields and the bleak mountains were all unheeded by him; and neither the roar of the wind nor the crash of intermittent peals of thunder, which ever and anon shook the very heaven to its centre, seemed to be audible to his ears. His thoughts were on times past—his mind's eye looked on the light of other days; hence it was that he did not see or hear what passed in his bodily presence. The Lord of Hammerstein was old, but he had once been young; he was infirm, but he had once been active; and though no longer able to wield a sword, or couch a lance, or bear the weight of his massive armour, he had, in the days that were over, been one of

the bravest warriors of the Rhenish bands, and as such had been the especial favourite of the Emperor Henry the Fourth, now aged and infirm like himself. He had followed the standard of that monarch until he was no longer capable of locomotion; and it was some time since years and public troubles had driven him to his strong castle of Hammerstein, there to pass over the remainder of his existence. It was of his campaigns with that prince that he was thinking, as he sat in the coved recess of his chamber window, and gazed out on the stormy scene with the abstracted eye of vacancy. He bethought him of the time when, in lusty youth, full of noble hardihood and valiant daring, he had first fought beside his imprisoned sovereign against the rebellious Saxons; and the remembrance almost made him young and vigorous again. He recalled the days when in the train of that hapless monarch he had scaled the rugged Rhetian Alps and the *Rillerschaft*—when the German rode over the plains of Lombardy like a whirlwind, and poured on Rome like a raging torrent; and his withered heart bounded with the ardour of boyhood, as he summoned back to memory the abasement of the proud pontiff, Gregory, and his flight before the victorious arms of that prince. That was the last of his campaigns; since then he had dwelt in peace in his strong castle of Hammerstein, shut out from all communion with the world—living alone in the past—and only anxious for longer existence, on account of his two fair daughters, whom, like Jephtha, king of Israel, “he loved passing well.”

In a further corner of the chamber sat two gentle maidens, like twin roses from one stem. They were of singular beauty, and of a natural goodness which well deserved the love of their aged sire: but still he was not altogether happy with them, for the corroding care of his heart was the want of a son; and he saw with the deepest feeling of sorrow the extinction of the direct line of his ancient family in his own person. This made him oftentimes appear stern and morose in his manner, and harsh in his bearing to them, when he was in reality only unhappy; but they knew him too well to feel hurt at whatever he said in these moments of irritation, and it was their pride and their pleasure to soothe his excited feelings, and alleviate their bitterness.

“What do you, Bertha, there?” he spake to the younger,

as, awakening from the trance of thought in which he had been plunged, he arose from his seat in the window and walked towards her.

The laughing girl held up her spindle playfully.

"Oh! I see," he proceeded, with a peevish tone and manner; "you spin yourself a gay bridal garment—you will leave your old father when it is finished, and go forth from his heart and home to seek the home and heart of another—a stranger."

"Nay, dearest father," replied the maiden, a big tear trembling in her long eyelashes the while; "indeed, you unwittingly do me a wrong. I spin no gay bridal garment for myself—I but spin a warm cloak for you, that the cold may not touch your aged frame when you ride abroad in this weary winter season. Neither do I wish to leave you, while you suffer me to stay with you; while you live, I ask but to be your humblest handmaiden."

"And you, Minna," continued the old man, turning to the elder, apparently unheeding the impassioned eloquence of her sister, "you weave my shroud, eh?—is it not that you are busy with?—you long for the old man's death, don't you?"

"Father! my beloved father!" cried the excited girl; "oh! father, you do me a great injustice!—a cruel wrong! Heaven forgive you for it!"

Her emotion choked her utterance for some moments:—the pearly tears coursed each other like a tiny torrent down her peach-like cheeks.

"Oh, my father!" sobbed she; "I wish not your death; for would it not break my own heart? Oh father, father! would that I could make you live for ever! The web that I weave is not for thy winding-sheet, but for thy robe of peace and joy, when on high festal days you gather around you in our ancient hall the friends of your youth—the companions of your age—the beloved of your heart—and make yourself merry over the pleasures of the present, or the fond recollections of the past."

The old man was silent. Bertha hung on his neck—Minna was at his feet. He could not but be happy, in the pure love of two such gentle beings, so young, so beautiful, so spotless, and so innocent.

"Yes, my dear girls," he replied, as if awakening from an unpleasant dream; "God knows how firmly I believe that you

love me, and desire me to live; and God only can know the depth and the intensity of the love which I feel for you."

He raised Minna as he said this, and then he kissed them both on the forehead. It was a beautiful sight to look on—that aged man and his blooming daughters, linked thus in the close bonds of holy and most sublimated affection.

"Yes, my dear girls," he continued, "I have wronged you; I know it!—I have been most unjust to you; I admit it!—but you will pardon your poor old father, for he has much to make him miserable as well as to make him happy."

He again kissed the fair girls, and pressed them to his aged bosom.

"God knows," he went on, "God knows that you are dearer to me than the light of mine eyes—than life itself. The dew on the flower is not half so delightful to the awakened lark, nor the sparkling of the fountain in the cool shadow of the forest to the weary wanderer over the burning plains of the south, as you are to my sight. But I cannot choose but weep when I think that I am the last of my name—the withered trunk of a long lineage, once noble and mighty—the parent-stock of brave men and virtuous women. Alas! alas!"

He hid his face in his hands, and, sinking in his ancient chair, wept in silence.

"Would that you had been valiant sons," he exclaimed, the paroxysm past; "would that you had been strong men, instead of weak, frail females! Then could I die in peace!"

The fond girls hung over him, and mingled their sympathetic tears with his. Night found them in this attitude.

The elementary strife abroad now raged fearfully: the thunder roared—the river raved—the wind bellowed and shrieked—and the distant mountains answered back their combined voices with a loud and an awfully prolonged echo. The terrified maidens clung closer to their sire; accustomed as they were to the wild wintry storms, such a one as this affrighted them: they had never known nature so convulsed before. A knock at the door of the chamber aroused them, and excited still further their fears. The warder of the castle entered.

"What would you, Diedrick?" asked the old baron.

"Two pilgrims, my lord, wait at the outer gate, praying

shelter for the night," replied the man. "Shall I admit them?"

"God in heaven forbid," replied the baron, "that I should refuse their prayer! Man! man! you should have known me better than to deem I needed asking to admit a weary traveller at any time, but especially at such a time as this. Go!—haste!—fly! and admit them at once. Bring them hither, when they are warmed and dry, and I will myself bid them welcome, to make amends for your error. And you, my dear children," he said, addressing himself to his daughters, "make ready our evening meal as speedily as possible, that these hapless pilgrims, tost of the tempest and buffeted by the storm may partake of it along with us."

In due time the applicants for admission were introduced by the warder. The old baron and his fair daughters looked on them with some curiosity. One was a man of noble bearing, aged in seeming, and somewhat infirm; but his face was so completely hidden with his cowl, that nothing could be said with certainty as to his years or appearance. The other was a stalwart man of mature years, with a bronzed countenance, scarred across and athwart in various places; it was undeniable that he had been a soldier: he wore no cowl, and his face was quite uncovered. The former advanced to the centre of the hall—his step was stately, his form erect, his aspect that of a prince, though his garb was coarse as coarse could be. The latter hung back, as in reverence or in fear, and would not pass beyond the threshold of the apartment, until his companion beckoned him forward. The old baron and his lovely daughters rose to greet them, and proffer the hospitalities of the castle. After supper they conversed together for a while.

"Whither, my friends, are you bound on your pious mission?" asked the baron, addressing himself, as if instinctively, to the cowed pilgrim. "Go ye to Spain, or haply to Palestine? Or do ye now return to your homes and families, your toilsome task completed?"

The pilgrim answered not, but bowed his head on his knee for a while, and sobbed so bitterly, that the tender-hearted maidens wept to hear him. At length he raised himself, and, standing erect on the floor, flung back his cowl, and gave his

face and form to the full view of his entertainers. It was a noble but a sorrowful countenance, aged, and worn, and wan; it was graced with long silver locks, which flowed wildly about it; but grief seemed to have done as much to mark it with the emblems of decay as years were capable of effecting.

"God of heaven!" cried the baron. "See I aright? It is, it is my emperor! my lord! my master!"

He sunk on his knees at the feet of the pilgrim; it was, indeed, his rightful sovereign, Henry the Fourth, who stood before him. His fair daughters and the monarch's pilgrim-companion did the same.

"But how is this?" exclaimed the aged baron in a kind of horror, as though he had been witness to a sacrilege, while he gazed on the emperor's altered aspect and travestied appearance. "How is this, my emperor? What hath befallen? Why are you here, and in this garb? Where is the imperial purple that should clothe thy shoulders? Where the crown that should cover thy anointed head? What has been thy hap? Hast thou been conjured by some foe? Where is the villain? Or hath some traitorous thief despoiled thee of the ensigns of royalty and empire? But ah, my poor head! I now recollect it all—an exile—a deposed prince! Oh my God, my God!" He sobbed bitterly as he spake these words: then, with much animation of manner, he continued, "God of heaven, that I were once more young! But give me my sword, and, old as I am, he shall not escape me. My lord—my master—my emperor!—pardon an old man for his forgetfulness of what has passed in the world—pardon him that he remembered not what had befallen thee!"

The emperor raised his ancient friend most graciously, and pressed his hand to his heart, as men do that of a true friend: he then signalled the maidens to be seated; his companion stood respectfully at a little distance behind.

"Brother in arms! faithful friend!" thus spake the monarch, addressing the baron, "would that all were like thee! Yes, I have been cruelly treated; but not in fight have I fallen. A treacherous foe allured me into his toils, immured me in a prison, and for five long years left me to pine in bitter

captivity. Yes, a treacherous foe, assisted by traitorous subjects, hath despoiled me of the insignia of empire, and left me as you see me—a fugitive and a beggar.”

“And the traitor?” cried the old lord of Hammerstein, “is ——”

“My own son,” said the emperor, sorrowfully.

Bertha and Minna embraced their aged sire as he stood aghast, with eyes upraised to heaven in wonder and deep amaze at such an accumulation of human perfidy. The monarch hid his face in his hands; his companion hung down his head, and wept aloud.

“Happy the sire,” resumed Henry, “whose children are uncorrupt—whose sons are the props of his declining years; but happier he who has no son to be feared of in his old age. Praise God, my faithful friend, for his gift to thee—two lovely daughters, who have no ambition but to please thee; no plans but to smooth the path of thy life; no designs but to defer the approach of that death which is inevitable to all; or to make thy last moments peaceful and happy. Heaven has been bountiful to thee, and thou hast well deserved it: but to me——oh God! oh God!”

The afflicted emperor again wept bitterly.

“Your pardon, sire,” interposed the old lord; “all are not alike. And sorry should I be if, in this honest German land, there was to be found another son who could treat his father as thine has treated thee. Yet you are right; God has been gracious to me—gracious far beyond my deserts; and still I repine.”

The fond father clasped his affectionate daughters to his heart: the emperor looked on the scene with mingled emotions of sorrow and pleasure.

“But say, sire,” asked the aged baron, “whither go you now? how hast thou escaped? whence comest thou?”

“It is a brief tale, and soon told,” replied Henry. “In my prison at Klopp, the warder was my constant companion: behold him, then, now, my best friend!” He pointed to his brother-pilgrim as he spoke. “Though rugged of aspect, he is gentle of heart, ay, even as a maiden. To his kindness am

I deeply indebted for many alleviations of my misery; to his truth and his honesty do I alone owe my escape, my life, mayhap, my all! He will tell his own story."

The emperor's humble companion then came forward at a signal from his master, and spake thus:—

"My heart was sore to see how the son treated the father; my heart was sore to see my sovereign in such a sad strait. I remembered I was once a son myself, and I also remembered how I followed the victorious armies of my lord the emperor to Italy. You, noble Baron von Hammerstein, were in that glorious expedition: I was often beside you. I knew too that I was a father myself, and I felt for the emperor with a father's feelings. 'Cost what it may,' said I to myself, 'I shall set him free.' I laid my plans——"

"And we are here," interposed the emperor, "thanks to thy fidelity and thy discretion, never more to sever in this life."

"Now, God bless thee," exclaimed the old Lord of Hammerstein, grasping the soldier's hand in a fervour of joy, "God bless thee! God bless thee!"

"And now, my old friend and brother in arms," continued Henry, "I would fain retire to rest, for I am sore weary, and very sick. But I must pray you, ere morning come, to despatch a messenger to Cologne with news of my coming. My companion sleeps beside me.—Good night!"

They left the apartment as he spake, preceded by the old baron's fair daughters, and followed by himself. The emperor slept peacefully that night. Early the next day he dropped down the Rhine to Cologne under the escort of his aged host.

ANDERNACH.

The Antonacum, alluded to by Ammianus Marcellinus, in his "History of Julian the Apostate," was, most probably, the original of the city of Andernach. It was founded in the very early ages of the Roman empire, and, perhaps, may even date

its existence from the time of Drusus Germanicus, who, it is said, erected there one of the fifty castles built by him on the Rhine. Subsequently the head-quarters of a Roman legion, and the seat of a military prefect, under the *dux*, or commander-in-chief at Mainz, it became absorbed into the conquests of the Franks, who fixed their royal residence here; and finally, the fifth Henry, the unnatural son of the hapless subject of the preceding memoir, transferred it to the then archbishop of Cologne, Frederick the First, in reward for the assistance afforded to him by that prelate against the Saxons (A.D. 1114).

In the war of succession between the Emperor Philip of Suabia, brother and successor to Henry the Sixth of the Hohenstaufen family, and Otto the Fourth, the anti-emperor, son of Henry the Lion, Duke of Brunswick, which desolated Germany for twelve consecutive years, the city of Andernach suffered severely and deservedly the punishment of that ultra-partizanship which abnegates the better feelings of our common nature, and avails itself of any power it may happen to possess for the purpose of trampling down and destroying every thing held sacred by mankind. The citizens warmly embraced the cause of Otto; and a close siege was, in consequence, laid to their city by his opponent, Philip. The place, which was strongly fortified, was defended by a body of troops from the duchy of Lorraine, who, in conjunction with the inhabitants, committed the most brutal excesses during the beleaguering. Among other infamous acts of violence and rapine perpetrated by them was the following—an act which, in the sequel, called down on their heads the utmost rigour of the conqueror. After attacking and robbing the convent of St. Thomas, then a nunnery for noble ladies, under pretence that these harmless women were favourable to the cause of Philip, they seized upon a nun, the youngest of the sisterhood, and, stripping her entirely naked, paraded her through the town on an ass's back. This done, they anointed her body all over with honey, and then rolling her in feathers, they once more placed her astride on the tallest horse to be found in the town, with her face to the animal's tail, and in this state again paraded her through the streets of the city—the laughing-stock and mockery of a jeering crowd. What became of this poor lady afterwards is not stated in any account of the trans-

ANDERNACH CHURCH.

Published by F C Westley, Childs Place Temple Bar

RUINS AT ANDERNACH.

Published by F C Westley, Childs Place, Temple Bar

action now extant. On the surrender of the city, however, in a very short time afterwards, Philip took ample vengeance on the base perpetrators of this unmanly outrage. Such of them as were the most active in it, he commanded to be cast into caldrons of boiling water, where they miserably perished; and various other punishments, equally severe in degree, were inflicted on every one of those who were known to be in any way participators in it.

Andernach was subsequently engaged in almost all the insurrections which took place from the twelfth to the fifteenth century against the archbishops of Cologne; and in every one of these popular outbreaks its citizens are to be found among the most active antagonists of the ecclesiastical pretensions. The last insurrection of any note that they were involved in was the unsuccessful one of 1496,* in which they were defeated, deprived of their privileges, and their city, irrevocably degraded, annexed to the principality of Cologne.

During this period there existed a perpetual feud between the burghers of Linz and the citizens of Andernach; and to such a pitch was its virulence carried, that not alone was there no intercourse kept up between them, and marriages forbidden, but a sermon was also preached in public, in the market-place of the latter city, on St. Bartholomew's day in every year, for the sole purpose of vilipending the inhabitants of the former, and keeping alive a spirit of unceasing animosity against them. It is stated that this insane hatred arose from the circumstance of an unforeseen and unexpected attack of the burghers of Linz on the citizens of Andernach, in which a great number of the latter were unresistingly massacred; but authentic local or general history makes no mention of the matter.

The remaining history of Andernach is soon related. It was attacked and stormed by the Swedes in the Thirty Years' War, A.D. 1632; and fifty-six years afterwards it was again captured and pillaged by the French troops, in one of the desolating campaigns of that period (A.D. 1688). In the very same year, also, it became a prey to fire, which destroyed almost every residence left standing within its walls—seventy-four houses

* Vide vol. i. p. 189, art. "Bonn."

only escaping the flames of all within the circuit of the city. It has never since recovered its pristine importance; and even now it is but at best a heap of inhabited ruins.

Andernach is full of remains of the classical as well as of the middle ages. Local antiquarians claim the illustrious Roman emperor, Valentinian the First, as their townsman, and confidently assert that his body lies interred in the beautiful parochial church, of which a view is given in the accompanying illustrations to this volume.* They also insist upon it, that the race of Merovignian monarchs had their abode as well as their origin within its walls; and in proof of the various traditions which they still preserve upon that subject, they shew the extensive ruins of the regal palace of these ancient Frankish kings, in the vicinity of the river. These ruins, however, are now known to belong to the abode of the dukes, or Gau-grafs of Austrasia, who governed the district under the Merovignian and Carlovignian dynasties; but, in strict truth, it must be added, that there is nothing whatever to disprove the possibility of that weak and wicked race of sovereigns having taken their rise, and occasionally held their court, within its precincts. Among the legends of that race these are related:—

ORIGIN.

The first monarch of the Franks of whom history makes any mention is Clodio, the son of Pharamond, and father of Merovæus, who gave name to the Merovignian dynasty. Clodio lived in the beginning of the fifth century, and, according to tradition,—for history knows nothing of him besides his name,—resided at Andernach, on the Rhine. It was in the ancient palace of the Austrasian kings, the remains of which are still to be seen in that venerable city, that his son Merovæus was born: how he was begotten, the legend itself shall state:—

It was noon, in the middle of the burning summer of the

* Valentinian died at Bregetio, on the Danube, near the present city of Presburg, of an immoderate fit of rage with the deputies of the rebellious Quadii, Nov. 17th, A.D. 375. It is, therefore, altogether improbable that he could have been buried in Andernach.

year of grace 400 ; and Clodio and his queen bathed together in the cool clear waters of the Rhine, which ran beautifully at the bottom of their palace garden. As they splashed about in the refreshing element, entirely unconscious of observation or of danger, they speedily became aware of the approach of a huge marine monster, which, rising on a sudden from the depths of the current, threw itself like lightning between them, and seized on the lovely person of the terrified and unresisting queen. Clodio, petrified with astonishment, hastened to the shore for his arms ; but the monster following him closely, and making such hideous faces at him, that every moment he feared he should be devoured, he considered that it would be a wiser course for him to alarm the palace, rather than to attempt his lady's rescue alone. By the united aid of his guards and his domestics, he deemed that he should succeed in effecting it with less risk and greater advantage. Accordingly, he gathered up his garments, and ran towards the palace as quickly as his legs could carry him, crying aloud for assistance for the struggling queen.

In the meanwhile, the monster had effected his purposes with the unfortunate lady ; and had escaped to the depths of the river long ere the return of Clodio. She did not, however, mention to her husband what had taken place in his absence, like a prudent woman as she was ; but she patiently permitted things to take their course, without unnecessarily troubling herself or others about their possible result.

In due time she was delivered of a male child ; but such a child ! He was unlike any other human being in the world—if human being could be called one, having more the appearance of a monster than a man. All adown his spine, from the nape of his neck to the inferior extremity of his trunk, was clothed with long, strong bristles ; his fingers and toes were webbed together like those of a water-fowl ; his eyes were defended by a film, similar to what is seen in birds and fishes, instead of a lid ; his misshapen mouth extended from ear to ear, like that of a huge cod ; and his arms, and thighs, and legs, even to his fingers and toes, were covered over with large scales, like the body of an armadillo. Such was the offspring of that unnatural embrace, according to the testimony of this tradition.

Clodio easily divined the cause of this uncouth form and

monstrous aspect in the new-born child ; and it was not difficult for him to persuade the queen to disclose the secret of her shame, on promise of pardon and forgetfulness of it in the future. With a degree of prudence which exactly tallies with his conduct at the time of the accident, he concealed the real circumstances of the case from his subjects, and adopted this semi-monster as his own son, giving him the name of Merovæus,* from his piscatory paternity. Failing in any other issue of his marriage, he was succeeded by this unnatural progeny, who perpetuated a long line of sovereigns, the most worthless, the most wicked, and the most imbecile, which the pen of history has ever had to chronicle.

ACTIONS.

Childerich, the son and successor of Merovæus, was expelled from the throne in the early part of his reign by his incensed subjects, for seducing the daughters and wives of his chief nobility, and indulging in other libidinous excesses not to be mentioned without sullyng these pages. One fast friend alone remained to him among his chiefs and nobles ; his name was Winomadus. Having no male or female relatives, or close connexions, this chief did not feel the same antipathy to the deposed monarch as did his fellow-subjects ; nor was he under an equal necessity with them to get rid of him, especially as he had always participated largely in his unlicensed pleasures. To him Childerich confided the task of watching over his interests during his compulsory absence, giving him at the same time a gold ring, which, despatched to him by a special messenger, was to be the signal for his return. Childerich then took refuge in Thuringia, at the court of Basinus, the king of that country.

In the meanwhile, the Franks had elected Ægidius, a Roman general, to the sovereignty over them ; but they were still unsatisfied, and seemed to have only exchanged bad for worse. The lawless conduct—the brutal lust—the cruelty—the oppression—and, above all, the injustice of their new sovereign—so disgusted them, that they once more cast about how to rid

* *Merweg, Merotech, Merovig, or. Merofagi, Merovingingi.*

themselves of him, and select another in his stead. This being speedily made known to Childerich, through his friend Winomadus, he rapidly returned to the shores of the Rhine; and, gathering strength of force as he proceeded in his march, he soon appeared before Andernach at the head of a formidable army, composed, in great part, of his former subjects, aided by his Thuringian auxiliaries, and was again hailed as king by the Franks.

During his abode at the court of Thuringia, however, Childerich, faithful to his follies, and unforgetful of his favourite vice, had contrived to seduce the affections of Basina, the queen of his protector. When he had succeeded in completely repossessing himself of his kingdom, to crown his treachery, he induced her to abandon her husband and her home, and come to live with him, as his mistress and his queen, at Andernach. Basina was a sorceress, and she had the power of foreshadowing the future to those who placed themselves under her guidance for the purpose of seeing it; and Childerich, like most wicked and all weak men, was greatly prone to credulity and superstition. He anxiously desired to see what fate had in reserve for his race; and Basina undertook to gratify his curiosity, and open the page of the future to his longing eye. Accordingly, one night, at the midnight hour, she led him forth from their chamber in the palace to the top of the high hill behind the town, on which ages afterwards the once famous convent of St. Thomas was erected. There bidding him stand on the summit, and look out over the plain which stretched between the base of the acclivity and the bounding river, she proceeded herself to the rear, and commenced her magical operations.

"What see you now, my husband?" she asked, after the lapse of a considerable time spent in various forms of incantation; "what passes before your eyes? say."

"I see," replied the king,— "I see a great light on yonder plain, though all around and about me is pitch darkness."

"Well," she replied, rather sternly.

"I see," he proceeded,— "I see an immense assemblage of wild animals,—the lordly lion, the spotted pard, the striped tiger, the huge elephant, the graceful unicorn—gods! they are

coming this way!—they'll devour us!" He turned, as though to fly.

"Fool," said the sorceress sharply, "they cannot come here, and they will not harm you. Look again. What see you now?"

He looked again; he was evidently in much alarm.

"I see bears, and wolves, and jackalls, and hyænas. Heaven protect us!" he resumed, in fear and trembling, "the others are all gone! How is this?"

"Peace!" interposed the queen, "it boots not to you."

The king's heart quaked, and he was silent under her reproving glance.

"Look again!" cried she, after a moment's pause, "look again,—'tis your last time! What see you now?"

"I see now dogs and cats, and little animals of all kinds," he made answer in a more assured tone. "But there is one small animal—smaller than a mouse—who seems to hold them all in subjection. I do not know what it is like, or what it may be; but, oh, wonder upon wonder! he is eating them up!—he has swallowed them all!—ay, every one of them,—dogs, cats, rats, and mice, all—all! one after another!"

"That will do," spake the queen: "the play is over."

Childerich looked again; but the light, the plain, the animals, all had vanished, and there was only darkness and dreary vacancy around. He prayed the queen to tell him what these things denoted, and she promised compliance as soon as they reached the palace. As they lay in bed together that night, she thus outspoke to him in accordance with his request, and her own promise.

"The first vision you beheld denoted our immediate successors in this kingdom. Bold as lions will they be, fearful as tigers, strong as elephants, unique as unicorns, beautiful as the spotted pard. These are the men of an age. One hundred years shall they rule over this land; for a century shall they be its sovereigns."

"Praise be to the gods!" exclaimed the delighted Childerich.

"The second," pursued she, "are the men of the next age

—of the following century—our more remote descendants—their immediate successors in this sovereignty.”

Childerich liked not much the similitude of his offspring to those animals of the second vision, and he made a gesture to that effect when he heard it. The queen, however, heeded him not, her mind's eye looked not on the present—she saw only the future.

“Rude as the bear,” she went on, rapt in her subject, “fell as the wolf, fawning as the jackall, cruel as the hyæna, shall they be—the curse of their people—their own curse!”

“Enough! enough!” cried the king; “go on to the last.”

“The last one, of the age following, the last of your name and lineage—the century which comes next after—they will be,”—she continued,—“weak, timid, irresolute, vacillating, and uncertain—the prey of every thing base, and mean, and low—the victims of violence—the sport of deceit and cunning; they will at last be deposed and destroyed by one of the smallest of their own subjects.”

If this tale be true, how wonderfully was the queen's prediction verified in the result! Pepin of Herstall, mayor of the palace to the Austrasian monarchs, who overturned the Merovingian dynasty about three hundred years after its foundation, is stated to have been one of the smallest men of his day.

The further fate of this race is more within the province of history than the scope of these pages.

An interest of another and a gentler nature attaches, however, to Andernach palace and its vicinity; or the well-known legend of St. Geneviève belongs to them. We have the authority of a historian,* the sanction of the church,† and the credulity of many believing generations, for the general correctness of this wide-spread and touching tradition. That its main features are true, no one can doubt after such concurrent testimony.

* *Vogt. Rhein. Gesch. u. Sag.* b. 3.

† Geneviève of Brabant has long been a standard saint in the Roman calendar.

GENOFEVA OF BRABANT.

In the year of grace 558, the four kingdoms of the east and west Franks, Burgundy, and Germany, were united into one monarchy, in the person of Clotaire, the youngest son of Chlodwig, or Clodio, founder of the Frankish empire, on the demise of his three brothers, Theodore, Chlodomir, and Childebert, without male issue of sufficient age to succeed to the throne.* The great extent of this empire caused the king, Clotaire, to apportion out the chiefest parts of it to his military retainers: and each gau, or tract of land, had a count, or gaugraf, set over it as governor and head, in the same manner as the descendants of Clotaire were subsequently ruled themselves by their own chief officers. At this period the Rhine watered the shores of Austrasia—the fertile country lying between that river, the Maas, and the Mosel, was so named—and formed the boundary of that, then one of the most important portions of the kingdom.

Two centuries later, when Austrasia was still nominally governed by the worn-out remnant of the Merovignian monarchs, Theodoric the Fourth, but in reality by the celebrated Charles Martel, mayor of the palace, and founder of the Carlo-vignian dynasty, its deserted second capital, Andernach, was occupied by one of these gaugrafs, or counts, who, in the troubles of the time, and through the impunity of ages, had

* Chlodomir left behind him two sons, in their minority, who were slain before they came of age, by order of their uncles Clotaire and Childebert, to prevent their succession to the kingdom. Montesquieu, (*Esprit des Loix*, *Leo XVIII.* chap. 29), quoting Gregory of Tours (*liv. iii.*) in relation to this circumstance, says: "On a vu, que chez les Germains on n'alloit point à l'assemblée avant la majorité: on étoit partie de la famille, et non pas de la république. Cela fit que les enfans de Clodomir, roi d'Orléans et conquérant de la Bourgogne, ne furent point déclarés rois, parce que, dans l'âge tendre où ils étoient, ils pouvoient pas être présentés à l'assemblée. Ils n'étoient rois encore, mais ils devoient l'être lorsque ils seroient capable de porter les armes: et cependant, Clotilde, leur aïeule, gouvernait l'état. Leurs ondes, Clotaire et Childebert, les égorgèrent, et partagèrent leur royaume. Cet exemple fut cause que, dans la suite, les princes pupilles furent déclarés rois d'abord après la mort de leurs pères."

assumed an absolute sway over that portion of the kingdom, and acknowledged only in semblance the authority of the weak and wicked monarch, who then resided in Paris. Tradition, for happily we have no higher authority, tells us that his name was Siegfried; that he was a brave and a bold man; that he was sprung from one of the oldest and most noble families among the Ripuarian Franks; that his power was great, and his alliances co-extensive with his power; that his friendship was much courted by his sovereign, Theodoric; that he was in the confidence of his sovereign's sovereign, Charles Martel, whose ambitious views he favoured and seconded; and that, finally, he had but recently married a most beautiful and virtuous wife, Genofeva, daughter of the Duke of Brabant, better known in the monkish lore of the middle ages, and the imitative romance of modern times, as the blessed St. Geneviève of Brabant. It is of her remarkable history—most remarkable indeed, if it may be credited—that the following legend treats. There is not a cottage in the northern and eastern parts of France, in the western parts of Germany, in the new sovereignty of Belgium, or in the fens and flats of Holland and Flanders, that does not possess some print or daub, or picture or memorial, illustrative of it.

Siegfried and Genofeva lived together for some time in peace and happiness, although they were unblessed with any offspring. It was about this period that the Saracens, under their great Emir Abderrahman, crossed the Pyrenees; making an inroad into the very heart of the Frankish monarchy, and penetrating as far north as Tours, with the view of possessing themselves of the entire of Christendom.* Among the knights and nobles summoned to the aid of the faith, and the defence of the kingdom against the infidels, Siegfried was of the first; and, at the head of all the available chivalry of his district, he set forth without delay to join the main army, and meet the common enemy. Fain would the fond Genofeva have accompanied her beloved husband to the wars, and willingly would she have

* A.D. 732.

shared with him the perils and privations of the camp, the dangers and distresses of the field ; but he would not hear of such a sacrifice on her part, however much he felt proud of it himself, and she was forced by his care to remain in Andernach, until the campaign should terminate in one way or the other. That she might have every necessary protection in his absence, he selected from the most favoured of his followers a young and noble knight, Sir Golo von Drachenfels, and confided her to his safe keeping while the contest lasted ; constituting him joint regent of his territory with her, until his own return from the south to resume again its government. The parting between the tender pair was touching to think of and painful to witness ; but it took place notwithstanding. Siegfried set forth on his distant and dangerous journey, full of spirits and hope ; while his young bride wept alone and in silence her sad bereavement.

For days and weeks did the fair Genofeva remain inconsolable : for weeks and months was she sad and sick at heart for her great loss. Her single solace was the fond anticipation of her husband's return ; her only consolation, to talk of him to her handmaidens, as they sat around her at needle-work in her bower ; to pray for his safety was her sole pleasure ; to rejoice in his success, her greatest gratification and delight. In the meantime, Sir Golo governed the state with justice and wisdom ; and, by his moderation and generosity, won to himself the hearts of all in the land. But, as the old proverb tells us, "all is not gold that glisters:" and so was it in the case of Sir Golo von Drachenfels. His heart was consumed by a passion which poisoned his existence, because it could not be indulged without degradation to his honour, and a base betrayal of confidence, friendship, and faith ;—he wildly, madly loved the fair and gentle Genofeva.

"It may be that my humble services will please her," argued he with himself, ere he accepted the charge confided to him by his friend and feudal sovereign : "at all events, I shall be ever near her." Then, when a thought of the consequence of tampering with his passion, or giving it rein over him, crossed his mind, he would exclaim : "To abuse Siegfried's confidence ! to debase myself ! to be a traitor to the trust reposed in me ! no ! never ! Such conduct is only that of a base-born hind.

I am a noble knight, and a noble knight's son. I will bask in the sunshine of her beauty; I will endeavour to alleviate the misery I feel in her soft smile—but to betray my friend and lord, I shall never do so!—no! never!”

Like many other well-intentioned men, however, he suffered his good resolutions to be led captive by his passions; and he yielded up his better judgment to the sway of his feelings, when resistance to their impulses might have been wholly successful.

The fair Genofeva, unconscious of his attachment, and all too innocent of heart to imagine aught of dishonour in her husband's chosen friend, permitted the young Sir Golo every intimacy which strict propriety sanctioned. He, in return, did all in his power to make himself agreeable to her. But his wild passion grew stronger daily; for, like most other passions, “its appetite only increased with what it fed upon:” still, however, neither by word nor by action did he give the slightest cause for suspicion of the fact to its innocent and lovely object. It did not, however, escape the observation of those around the court that the knight loved the ladye; but it came to the ears of the countess herself only by the merest accident, though some time spoken of.

One morning, as she took her accustomed walk in the pleasure-grounds of the palace, she heard Sir Golo sing to himself, as he deemed, unlistened by any person, a song descriptive of his own situation; and it was with horror, surprise, and deep sorrow, that she was, for the first time, aware of her own name mixed up with the fierce breathings of unholy passion, by him who should have been her best protector. From thenceforth the virtuous lady saw him scarcely at all: and it was only when the business of the state required it that she permitted his presence; but then, always before her handmaidens.

In a neighbouring castle, not far from the palace at Andernach, there dwelt a ladye, the widow of a baron, who had been guardian to Sir Golo von Drachenfels during his minority, and to whom, on the death of her husband, while the young Golo was yet a child, that office subsequently reverted. Her name was Mathilda. Once she had been very beautiful, and she

was then courted of all: years, however, had long effaced a great portion of her loveliness, and given her deceit in its stead. But, although old and not handsome, she was still vainer than ever she had been even in her youthful prime. If a feeling for any thing, unlike selfishness, abode in her bosom, it was for her *protégé*, Sir Golo, whom she loved with even more than a mother's affection, if that were possible. A formidable intriguer—a most consummate mistress of all the indirect arts of society at that period, she knew how to barb the dart while she soothed the victim, and could caress and flatter her prey even as she destroyed it. Such a woman it was that came on a lengthened visit to Andernach, to the court of the lovely Genofeva. It was like pairing the wolf and the lamb, so fearfully incongruous was the association.

The cloud which rested on the brow of her favourite Sir Golo was the first circumstance noticed by her; the second was the constraint which the pure-minded mistress of the palace imposed upon herself in his presence. From cunning like this woman's the secret could not be long concealed: by flattery and other artful means she succeeded in extracting, first from *her protégé* the confession of his love, and subsequently, from Genofeva, her knowledge of the fact.

"And now," said Sir Golo, in conclusion of his tale, "there is no alternative left for me. I must either fly or die."

"Fly or die!" mockingly repeated his confidant. "There is no need to do either. Leave the thing to me."

"I would fain inform my husband of the passion of Sir Golo," said, in a later communication to her, the fair Genofeva. "I may have no mystery with the lord of my affections as well as my person. He must know all."

"Oh, no!" exclaimed this wicked woman, "you shall do nothing of the kind. Would you get my poor boy murdered by the angry count? Surely, surely, you could never have the heart for that:" and the gentle Genofeva was thus won over to withhold the fatal secret from her husband.

And so, like a snake in the grass, or rather like the serpent amidst flowers, did this wicked woman dwell in the palace of Andernach. From that time forward she left no plan untried, no art unessayed, to seduce the affection of the countess from

her spouse, and to obtain their transfer to her accomplice, Sir Golo von Drachenfels; but she experienced only defeat in all her plans, and her base arts recoiled one after the other upon herself. The innocence and purity of the fair Genofeva were her best protectors; and she walked along "in glory and in joy," following undeviatingly the right path, because she knew not that there existed any other. In vain did the baroness seek to make her lend a favourable ear to the suit of her *protégé*; in vain did she expatiate on his worth, his youth, his comeliness; insinuation or entreaty were equally powerless, equally inefficacious, with the virtuous wife whom she would fain have made her victim. She did not, however, communicate the invariable repulses she received, nor the repeated defeats she sustained, to her accomplice and paramour, for such, in truth, he had become: but, on the contrary, by false representations and by deceitful promises, she contrived to hold out to him a hope of certain success in their nefarious efforts. Thus matters went on for a while.

Among the inferior domestics of the court, there was one named Dragonès, a man in every way above his lowly station. The countess was very partial to him because of his uniform good conduct; and she valued him greatly for his knowledge of the world, as well as much of what it contains—of men and things. It was his delight to select the choicest bouquet for her bower; and to bring her the most beautiful birds to be found in the forests gave him the greatest pleasure; while the gentle ladye always received his gifts with praise and kindness, because she knew them to be the offering of an honest heart, though humble,—of a heart entirely devoted to her service, and that of her beloved husband. It so happened that, early one morning, as this worthy man was abroad in the gardens of the palace, collecting a nosegay of dew-bathed flowers for her bower, he overheard a conversation between the Baroness Mathilda and her confederate, Sir Golo, in which enough was disclosed of their deadly plot against his mistress to make him shudder with horror, and cause his flesh to creep. Without a moment's delay he sought out Genofeva, and communicated to her all he had heard, and every thing that he had been privy to. The pure-minded lady was horrified at the

recital; but she was too good to injure even those who designed her harm: she deemed, on reflection, that Dragonés might have mistaken the purport of the conversation; or, that, in his zeal for her safety, he might perhaps have misinterpreted it. Influenced by these feelings, she did not act on the information she had received; she did not dismiss Mathilda from her court; nor did she command Golo to absent himself from her council: but she could not avoid displaying a degree of coldness and reserve towards the former which had never before been shewn by her; and to the latter she was so distant and ceremonious in their scant intercourse, that he was involuntarily compelled to keep at a greater distance from her pure presence than ever. "The wicked flee when no man pursueth:" how much more must they feel who know that their guilt is discovered? It was so with Golo and his paramour. Dragonés was at once suspected by them. As the transition from mad love to insane hatred is most easy, the countess and her faithful servant were doomed by them to immediate destruction; and every plan which baffled spite or defeated malice could devise was at once brought into play to effect their fearful purpose.

In the meanwhile, the Count Siegfried, unknowing of the danger which impended over his beloved wife, and all unconscious of the plots laid against his own peace and happiness, was pursuing a bright career of conquest and glory against the common enemy of Christendom. In the decisive victory of Tours, where the might of the Saracen was smote to fragments—even as the rock by the smith's sledge-hammer—by Charles Martel,* Siegfried took a very prominent part. For his valour and conduct on that day he obtained the public approbation of the commander, and the applause of the entire army. A spear wound, however, which he received in the affray, incapacitated him from taking the field for a long time after; and his convalescence was greatly delayed by the extraordinary silence of Genoveva, of whom, during wellnigh a year, he had now heard nothing. Day and night he thought of her, and of her alone; his soul was filled with fears for her safety or her health; but of her honour he never entertained the slightest suspicion. He

* Charles the Hammer.

could endure this state of torturing suspense no longer ; so, while the negotiations for peace were pending, he despatched a trusty messenger, the knight of Rheingrafenstein, to Andernach, to ascertain all the circumstances of his lady's condition.

It was a beautiful summer evening—the rooks were returning to their nests, the song-birds were warbling their vesper hymn, the cricket was chirping his farewell to day, and the tender plants, which close their petals to the night dew, were expanding their delicate bosoms, as if to catch a last kiss of the setting sun, when Genofeva, sad, but also rejoiced—if joy and sorrow can be coexistent in the same bosom at the same moment—sate alone in her garden bower, on the margin of that mighty river, the beautiful Rhine. That day had she received the message of her husband ; and her soul was filled with the most conflicting emotions. The love she bore him made her magnify his wounds, almost to deem him nigh to death ; while her heart throbbed with delight to find she was as fondly remembered by him as ever. She had not been long in this situation, when her solitude was disturbed by the heavy tread of a man. In a moment more his thick, hot breathing, was felt as well as heard by her ; for it scorched her delicate cheek, so close was it to her. Terrified and shocked beyond measure, she looked up ; and her horror was equal to her surprise when she beheld by her side Sir Golo of Drachenfels. It required not an instant's consideration to point out the course she should pursue ; she rose, and, beckoning the intruder aside, with all the dignity of her sex and station, made at once to leave the bower. But the die was cast ; the guilty traitor was too deeply steeped in crime ; his character, nay, his very existence, was in peril : he had staked his all—it was life or death with him at that moment. Stammering out a few incoherent words, he threw himself between the countess and the entrance of the arbour, and effectually cut off all egress from the spot.

“ Miserable man ! ” exclaimed the indignant Genofeva ; “ miserable man ! what would you ? Would you injure her whom you have sworn to protect, to uphold, to support, against all enemies ? Would you destroy the wife of your friend and master, whom he has trustfully confided to your care ? Off, wretched being ! Off ! off ! and let me pass on to the palace ! ”

The traitor, however, was not to be deterred by the dignity of innocence or the eloquence of virtue—few traitors ever were, ever are, or ever will be. He had gone too far to recede; to draw back would be perdition to him,—so, at least, he concluded with himself. If he advanced, he might meet with success; if he retreated, he was certain of death.

“It is all over now,” he cried, attempting to embrace the countess, his inflamed eyes the while glowing with uncurbed passion; “you must be mine. Will ye? will ye?”

“Never!” shrieked she; “never! Help! help! help!”

Her cries were not unheard; for he who gave them cause was not unnoticed nor unobserved. Dragonès, the faithful Dragonès, ever watchful for the safety of his beloved mistress, was at her side in a moment. He had seen Sir Golo enter the bower as he collected simples in the shrubbery; and he had followed close on his steps for the purpose of defeating his wicked designs against the innocent Genofeva.

“Unhand her, villain, or you die!” shouted he to Golo, in a voice of thunder. “Fear not, most gentle lady,” he addressed himself to the countess with much gentleness, “my life is at your service.”

“Base slave, begone!” shouted the infuriate traitor, drawing his sword as he spoke, and making a thrust at the intruder.

“Have at you, then!” cried Dragonès, making a deadly pass at him in return.

Genofeva fell senseless to the earth at the commencement of the affray.

“Help! help!” shrieked the Baroness Mathilda, who had been lurking in the bushes close by, to await the result of her infernal machinations. “Help! help! help!”

The gardener, old Adam, accompanied by a portion of the palace guard, were quickly on the spot.

“Seize that villain traitor,” said the wicked woman, pointing to Dragonès. “Seize him! seize him! he would fain have dishonoured the count, your lord. But for the timely coming of his friend, the good Sir Golo, he would have ere now effected it with the willing wife; and, behold, he has even drawn his sword on the representative of his sovereign! Was ever such bold-faced villany in such a slave?”

It booted not what the hapless Dragoness could say in his own defence; for who would believe a serf in preference to a noble knight, possessed too of the sovereign power of a state, and a noble lady, his dear friend? Certainly not one of their own class or condition, still less one of those beneath them. And the countess, who could alone have vindicated his innocence, was conveyed to her chamber in a state of protracted insensibility. His prayers and his protestations were unheeded, or only served to aggravate his guilt in the eyes of his captors; he was dragged off to the keep of the palace without delay; he was thrown at once into its deepest dungeon. "To make assurance doubly sure," a guard, composed exclusively of Golo and Mathilda's creatures, was placed constantly on the sick chamber of the countess; and reports the most injurious to her character, the most destructive to her fair fame, were industriously propagated in the court by the delinquents, during the dangerous illness that followed that scene of excitement and crime.

But this was not all. A confession, purporting to be made and signed by Dragoness, in which he acknowledged a guilty commerce with the countess, was forged by the conspirators; and the hapless victim, to prevent a *viva voce* examination, was removed by poison, prepared by the hands of the baroness herself. This confession, authenticated by the signature of Golo, was despatched to the camp at Tours; and the knight of Rheingrafenstein, who had arrived at Andernach almost about this time, was made the bearer of it to his lord, the Count Siegfried. In the meanwhile, the innocent Genofeva was kept a strict prisoner in her chamber, and denied all intercourse with any of her domestics who were supposed to entertain a feeling in her favour, until an answer should be received from her husband.

In this solitary confinement, bowed down by sorrow, abandoned by hope (for she had been informed of the death of Dragoness, and the simulated confession of his guilt), despairing of relief, and all but utterly prostrate and broken-hearted, Genofeva gave birth to a beautiful boy, the first fruits of her inauspicious marriage. He was the very image of the count, his father; eyes, traits, hair, complexion, all were his; and not even the most casual observer could mistake the near relationship indicated so strongly by the close resemblance. But, blinded by

their own wickedness, the guilty twain, Golo and Mathilda, resolved to make this circumstance a further means for the more effectually accomplishing the hapless countess's destruction. The child was baptized by the name of Schmerzenreich—by reason that he was brought forth in sorrow, and seemed destined to suffer but pain in his passage through this life. Before this pledge of mutual love had attained a month of age, an *avant courier* announced the coming of the count, stating that he would be at Andernach in a few days, and giving orders for all requisite preparation for his coming. He came accordingly at the time appointed.

In a solemn assembly of the feudatories of the county, convoked by Siegfried for the occasion, Golo of Drachenfels stood forth as the accuser of the Countess Genofeva. He charged her with adultery—he charged her with treason to her husband's bed; and he asserted that her beautiful boy was the offspring of a shameless intercourse with the deceased Dragoness. These accusations he offered to prove by deadly combat in the duel, with whoever dared to dispute them, or to stand forth in that persecuted lady's defence.

Pale, silent, and sad, the gentle Genofeva sate at the bar of that awful court, and heard this foul accusation. When she arose to reply, her strength and her senses failed her together, and she sank to the earth in a deep swoon. She was, however, soon restored to recollection; and the trial proceeded.

"Genofeva of Brabant," spake the herald of the court, in the cold, clear tones of utter indifference, so wretched for the accused to hear, because so indicative of scant sympathy; "Genofeva of Brabant, have you no champion to take up your cause? If you have, name him. The court awaits your reply."

A deep stillness pervaded the assembly for some moments. The countess cast her eyes imploringly around on the crowded circle; but she could see no responsive glance among the knights and nobles who composed it; and she only sighed and cast down her eyes in answer.

The summons was repeated a second time, with the same result. A third and last time the herald put the question.

"She has!" replied a strong voice in the rear of the crowd, after another pause, in which the judges were preparing to pass

sentence on her as on one convict for want of defence, and doomed by the decision of heaven.

"Stand forth," cried the herald.

"I am here."

A buzz of delight resounded through the court as the young, valiant, and noble knight of Rheingrafenstein stepped forward and flung his gauntlet on the ground.

"You!" exclaimed Golo. "You!" and the traitor, unable to hide his emotion, bit his lips till the blood started.

"I will maintain the innocence of the gentle Countess Genofeva," exclaimed her brave defender; "ay! to the death I will maintain it. Be the battle with you, traitor, to the outrance."

"God defend the right!" solemnly spake the herald.

"Be it to-morrow," said Siegfried. "God defend the right!"

The court then broke up for the day.

The morrow came; the lists were erected; the court was assembled; the marshals of the field and their men were there fully accoutred. On a given signal the bars were thrown down, and the combatants entered. At another signal they commenced the affray. The battle was long and bloody; but God defended not the right to all appearance, for it ended with the death of the noble knight of Rheingrafenstein. In his eagerness to reach the traitor Golo, he had exposed himself too much to the skill of his adversary; and, through an unguarded spot, he received the deadly point of his antagonist's sword in his heart.

"Yours is only the triumph of hell," were the last words of the brave youth, as Golo approached to despatch him. "The triumph of hell," he muttered, as his life-blood welled forth on that fatal arena, and he sank down never to rise more on this earth.

The court had now no alternative, had they even a desire to avail themselves of one, but the condemnation of the culprit.

The Countess Genofeva was duly declared guilty of the weighty crimes charged against her; and by the same sentence was she degraded from her high rank, and sentenced to suffer the most painful form of death. Her innocent offspring was also included in this sweeping doom of destruction. The mode of her punishment was to be directed by the count; and the time

also it was left to him to fix ; but these he confided to the traitor Golo, since this disastrous occurrence grown to be his greatest favourite and sole confidant.

It was not, however, the policy of the fiendish Mathilda to permit her minion to superintend the execution of the countess ; for she thought that, at times, he had shewn too much remorse for the part he had performed in the work of her destruction, to be intrusted with a matter so essential to their mutual safety. Under pretence, therefore, of sparing him the painful feelings attendant upon the due discharge of this horrid duty, she proposed to undertake it herself ; and Golo, now entirely at her command, had no alternative but acquiescence in her suggestion. She then proceeded to put her designs into execution—to give the finishing touch to this hellish plot. Two ruffians attached to her suite were speedily commissioned to slay the hapless Genofeva. The place of execution was settled to be the darkest recesses of that part of the Ardennes forest, which then stretched down even to Andernach. The time was fixed for midnight ; and the proof of its completion, it was decided by this fiend, should be the tongues of her victims—that of the young and gentle countess, and her innocent, beautiful babe.

The wild wind roared in the sear leaves of the twisted trees, swinging the fathers of the forest as though their matted tops were a silken awning—the forked lightning shot across the dark sky, ever and anon, piercing the gloomy canopy which covered them, when the fair Genofeva, pressing to her heart, as in a last embrace, the helpless object of her maternal love, knelt on the green sward, and bowed down her gentle head to the deadly blow about to be inflicted on her by the glave of one of the two ruffians intrusted with her execution. The second ruffian forced from her arms her crying babe.

With a piercing shriek she cried, “ Oh ! let me give my boy one kiss more before I die.”

The ruffian again brought it to her, and she embraced it as only a dying mother may embrace her child. Giving him back to the man, she said,

“ I am now ready, strike ! ”

The broad, bright, uplifted sword, gleamed in the lightning as the ruffian whirled it rapidly round his head, to give

greater impetus to the descending blow: but ere it fell, quick as thought, an arrow from the underwood transfixed his heart, and he fell to the earth—a corpse. At the same moment, old Adam, the head-gardener of the palace, suddenly made his appearance, with another shaft set in his bow, its unerring point aimed direct at the second ruffian's heart.

“Stir not hence—stir not at all—or you are a dead carcass!” exclaimed the good old man. “Listen and obey, and you, may be, shall live—though 'tis pity to let you. Give me the boy!”

The terrified ruffian, who had made as though he would fly, at once became still; he trembled all over, for he saw that the old man was firm and fully determined.

“Rise, my noble mistress,” said old Adam to the countess, “rise, my good ladye, rise! Your life is safe. Here is your precious babe. Bless and preserve you both! Bless you! Bless you!”

Once more the fond mother hugged her infant to her heart. Who can tell her joy—her unspeakable delight?

“And now,” said he, turning to the cowering ruffian, “you must return to the palace with me. But first you must swear, by all you hold sacred, that you will do even as I bid you, and never betray me to any one.”

The oath was taken: the ruffian would have murdered his mother to save his own wretched life.

“Go, ladye,” said the old man silently, the big tears coursing each other rapidly down his pale and furrowed cheeks, “go, ladye, go, and may God comfort you. He who fed the prophet in the wilderness will not fail you in your need. I can no more. Adieu!”

Genofeva embraced her aged friend and departed; she was soon lost in the gloomy mazes of that thick forest. Adam and the ruffian returned to the palace. Before the latter saw his mistress, he accompanied the former to his humble abode; there he received from the hands of the good old man, the tongue of a sheep and the tongue of a lamb, which he had killed expressly for the occasion.

“Take these,” he said, “and even though your mistress were as wise as she is wicked, she would fail to discover the difference between them and those of her destined victims. You have

been amply rewarded; all my long savings have fallen to your lot; but Heaven will repay me, and I do not repine at their loss. But, remember, be secret; or, old as I am, your life is not worth a moment's purchase."

The ruffian sought his wicked mistress, and delivered into her hands these simulated proofs of his obedience. He easily satisfied her on the subject of his companion's death. She received them with demoniacal joy; and she rewarded him richly for the foul deed she supposed he had performed.

When the morning dawned, Siegfried was made aware of the execution of his young wife and child; and from that hour forth he never more smiled on any one. His conscience smote him for his cruelty; but he had also an undefined feeling, notwithstanding the clear conviction of his reason, that Genofeva was innocent. Peace nor rest he knew not from thenceforward; and by day as well as by night the images of his victims—the objects of his hasty vengeance—haunted his fevered imagination. Besides these compunctious visitings, however, his sleep was nightly disturbed with the vision of a spectral form. It was the ghost of the murdered Dragoness, who ever and always stood close to his couch in the deep watches of the night, affirming, in a solemn sepulchral voice, that he also was guiltless of crime. The count daily became paler and thinner; he seemed altogether broken down in appearance; and every thing told of a speedy catastrophe. The government of his county was entirely given up to the traitor Golo; and the false and ambitious baroness ruled his palace and his state with a sovereign sway. Thus passed over a long and weary year.

It was the morning of the new year; the hills and the valleys were sheeted with snow; the brooks and the smaller rivers were frozen in their course; the earth was bound up in the rigid gyves of winter—the mighty Rhine alone flowed free of these frozen fetters; the long heavy icicles hung pendulous from the naked boughs of the forest trees; the little starved birds sat cowering with the cold in their leafless tops, or flew, timidly, to the busy haunts of men to risk life and liberty for food and shelter in the inclement season. The severity of the cold was

intense ; but still the court of Andernach was in a joyous commotion. How came this to pass ? Thus : the Count Siegfried had at length shaken off the lethargy which hung so heavily on his heart since the condemnation and death of his once beloved wife ; and he was now, on a sudden, about to resume his former favourite amusement — the chase. From every apartment of the palace poured forth domestics and retainers, equipped for the inspiriting sport ; the neighing, the tramping, the pawing, the champing of eager steeds, were heard in every one of the various courts of the building ; the footmen thronged hastily through the great gates and the posterns towards the rendezvous in the forest ; the long unused hounds were barking and baying aloud, and bounding about in despite of the leash and the voice of the huntsman and his cracking whip, which ever and anon fell heavily on some wincing rioter — so glad they were to take the field once more ; and man and beast — horse, hound, and hunter — each wore the semblance of delight in their actions and in their countenances. Sir Golo of Drachenfels alone was sad in that gay throng ; but his accomplice, the Baroness Mathilda, was very unhappy. The former rode beside the count, who, that morning, looked brightly — seeming to have cast off altogether the cloud which had darkened his noble brow for a full twelvemonth past, and to participate in the exciting amusement with the same degree of pleasure as he was wont to feel in days of yore, when peace and happiness were his constant companions. What wrought this change ? Listen.

At the very moment when the old year was melting into the new, in the deep silence of the midnight hour, the ghost of the murdered Dragoness had taken its accustomed station by the bedside of Siegfried, and addressed him in these words :—

“ Go to the chase to-morrow,” spake the spirit ; “ go, even as was heretofore thy habit. Bid Sir Golo of Drachenfels to the sport. Place watch and ward on the Baroness Mathilda. Obey my behests, and the night will not arrive without bringing to you once more happiness : obey them not, and you perish in your sin. I come from an avenging God : justice must be done on the traitor ; the vengeance of heaven will fall on the murderer. ‘ For whoso sheds man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed.’ Adieu !”

The vision melted into thin air as the last word died on the count's ear.

"Adieu! adieu!" repeated the shadowy echoes.

Hurrah! hurrah! over moss and over moor,—over hill and over dale,—over ice and over snow,—through stream and through brooklet,—through bush and brier,—through wood and through water—tramp, splash, dash, crash; tra-li-ra-la, goes the merry bugle; cheerily shout the hunters; and head-long onward goes the gay train. The morning sun shines brightly on the sport; every heart in that throng is happy. No, there is one there a prey to all the fiends of hell, whom not even the chase can enliven: it is that of Golo. A presentiment of some great impending danger seemed to weigh down his soul to the lowest depths of remorse and despair. He spake not, he smiled not,—he was all wrapt up in his own gloomy thoughts, and saw not even the scene nor the pleasant circumstances which surrounded him. The forest was soon reached; the order of the hunt was speedily formed; a milk-white doe sprang up before them; the dogs were at once cast loose from the leash; halloo went the horns; the footmen cheered lustily; the hounds bayed most musically; the hunters shouted cheerily; the horses neighed, and whined, and champed the foaming bit; the chase went on merrily, right merrily.

"On, my merry men all!" shouted the exhilarated count.
 "On, my merry men! on!"

"Tra-la-li-ra-la!" pealed the shrill bugles on every side.
 "Tra-la-li-ra-la-la-la!"

Tramp—tramp—tramp—went the gallant steeds, the gay riders fondly patting their arched necks the while, and proudly smoothing down each flowing mane.

The baying of the hounds was beautiful for a hunter to hear; for,

"match'd in mouth like bells,
 Each under each, a cry more timeable
 Was never hallooe'd to nor cheered with horn,
 In Crete, in Sparta, nor in Thessaly."

The milk-white doe, however, soon distanced them all; dogs, riders, peons, horses—all were left behind after a short sharp

run, except the count and his close companion, the gloomy Sir Golo. They alone gained on the quarry.

"Now have at ye!" cried the count, as he neared the handsome animal. "'Tis a hit, Sir Golo, I'll guerdon my knight-hood!"

He flung his hunting-spear as he spoke; and, true enough, it grazed her side; a slight streak of blood shewed the extent of the wound; it was, haply, but a very slight one. In a moment more the hunted hind was buried in the bushes.

"Hurrah! hurrah!" shouted the animated hunter; "now she is ours!"

As he said these words he spurred his reeking steed fiercely onwards, and burst at once through the underwood, which separated him from his prey. An open space of some width then presented itself to his view; it was like a scene in paradise. He galloped across it, following the blood-stained track of the wounded animal.

"God of mercy!" exclaimed he aloud, drawing back as in affright. "What do I see? Hither, Golo, hither! Quick! quick!"

His companion, however, came up but slowly; they approached together the object of his hasty exclamation. Well might the count be surprised. It was a female of transcendent loveliness, in a state of entire nudity; but still completely covered by the impenetrable masses of her long yellow hair, which floated in glittering folds over her ivory shoulders, like the reflection of a rich sunset on the foam-tipped waves of the heaving ocean. This strange ladye knelt on one knee, stanching the blood which defiled the smooth white coat of the stricken doe; while a beautiful boy, of some twelve months old, lay close to the gentle animal sucking her soft dugs, as a child may the breast of a tender mother. The coming of the count and his companion was unheeded by her; indeed she was not conscious of their presence, so wholly was she absorbed in her office of mercy; and it was only when she had succeeded in effecting her purpose, and turned to embrace her boy, that she was aware of their proximity to her.

"God of goodness, save my child!" she exclaimed,— "my child! my boy!"

Her lovely form cowered over the laughing infant, as a hen does over her chickens when the hawk is in the sky above them. Her first emotion was the safety of her offspring; her second, shame for her untoward situation.

"Ladye, fear not," cried the count, "you have no cause of fear from me. Whoever you are, you are safe. But stay; bide ye a bit. Here!"

He flung her his mantle as he spake, and thus continued:—"Here, ladye, cover thee with this, and then look up that I may see thy face, which needs must be surpassing fair to match such a lovely form. Fear nothing! I am Siegfried, Gaugraf of Andernach, lord of this forest, and of the adjacent lands."

To envelope herself in the ample folds of the mantle so considerably afforded her—to catch up her infant in her arms—to rush towards the astonished count—to fling herself at his feet—to embrace his knees—to cling to them—was but the work of a single moment.

"My husband!" she shrieked, "my husband!"

"God of goodness! my wife!" was the cry of Siegfried, as he raised her from the earth, to which she had fallen, the first excitement of the moment over.

It was indeed the gentle Genofeva. "The Lord had tempered the wind to the shorn lamb." For twelve long months had she and her dear babe subsisted on the milk of the white doe, which led her husband to this recognition of his wife and child; for twelve long months had they been denizens of that forest in summer's heat and winter's snows; but they knew not to feel the inclemency of the season, for the God of all mercies was bountiful to them. Fondly and freely did the count fold them both in his arms; blessings and thanks were showered down by him in abundance on their innocent heads. The beautiful white doe, the proximate cause of all this gratulation, bounded about playfully the while, like a happy spaniel dog, ever and anon caressing the ladye and her infant charge, sniffing curiously at the garments of the count, or butting angrily at the traitor Golo, who stood apart at a little distance from the group—a confounded spectator of the scene.

In the meantime, the horn of the count had collected together his numerous train of followers; and there they stood, all

around, in a silent circle, with many tearful eyes among them, wondering every one at the singularity of the scene. Each, however, acknowledged that it was a miracle, and admitted that the hand of Providence had prepared the meeting. As they gazed and wondered, Sir Golo stepped forth into the midst of the throng, and thus addressed the count:—

“My lord,”—he spake solemnly, like a man at the hour of death,—“my lord, I am the guilty one. Your noble and virtuous ladye is innocent of all crime.”

On which he related all he knew—his own treason, and the fiendish acts of his accomplice.

“I would fain expiate my crime with my life,” he said in conclusion, “for life has long been a heavy load to me; ever since I injured her I love has it been to me a bitter burden. Willingly shall I lay it down now, and die and be at rest.”

The count and the gentle Genofeva, followed by their escort, shouting like men mad with excess of joy, returned to the palace at Andernach. They were greeted heartily by the town’s folk, who thronged in thousands—young and old, men, women, and little children—to welcome back again their beloved mistress. Golo, strongly guarded, brought up the rear of the procession; he was overwhelmed with the curses and taunts of the multitude, for the whole tale had travelled before them.

There were rejoicings in the dominions of the count for a week, in commemoration of this happy event; and not an eye in Andernach was closed that night for excess of happiness.

Next morning the traitor Golo was brought forth, and doomed to die; the wretched Mathilda, his companion in crime, had poisoned herself the preceding night: the happiness of those she hated was too much for her to witness. Short shrift was allowed the traitor, and his guilty head fell amidst the execrations of the honest multitude,—ever abhorrent of such atrocious treachery. The count and countess lived long and happily thenceforward and thereafter, and died nearly about the same time,—the one in the fulness of years, the other in the odour of sanctity.

Such is the legend of Genofeva of Brabant, which has found a responsive echo for ages in the hearts of those long dead,

THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
 WASHINGTON, D. C.
 DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
 OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
 1914

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(it is now a leather factory*), that late of an autumnal night, the ferryman of the ferry from that city to the Devil's House on the other side of the river, who lived on the edge of the bank below the ruins of the ancient palace of the kings of Austrasia, was accosted by a stranger, who desired to be put across just as he was about to haul up his boat until the next morning. The stranger seemed to be a monk; for he was closely cowled and gowned from head to heel, in the long, dark, flowing garb of some ascetic order.

"Hilloa! ferry!" he shouted aloud, as he approached the shore of the river. "Hilloa! ho!"

"Here, ahoy! here, most reverend father," answered the poor ferryman: "what would ye with me?"

"I would that you ferry me across the Rhine to yonder shore of the river," replied the monk. "I come from the Convent of St. Thomas, and I go afar on a weighty mission. Now, bouné ye quick, my good friend, and run me soon over."

"Most willingly, reverend father!" said the ferryman. "Most willingly — most willingly! Just step into my boat, and I'll put you across the current in a twinkling."

The dark-looking monk entered the boat, and the ferryman shoved off from the bank. They soon reached the opposite shore. The astonished ferryman, however, had scarce time to give his fare a good evening, when he disappeared from his sight, in the direction of the Devil's House; and in a single moment more he saw him no longer. Pondering a little on this strange circumstance, and inwardly thinking that the dark monk might just as well have paid him his fare, or, at least, bade him good night, before he took such unceremonious leave, he rowed slowly across the stream back again to his abode at Andernach.

"Hilloa! ferry!" once more resounded from the margin of the river to which he was approaching. "Hilloa! ho!"

"Here, ahoy!" involuntarily responded the ferryman, but not without some sensation of fear, some undefined apprehension of danger. "What would ye?"

He rowed to the shore, but he could see no one for a long while, owing to the darkness of the night. As he neared the

* "There's nothing like leather."—*Old Fable*.

more closely cowed, if possible, even than they, stood on the very edge of the stream, and beckoned him to them. It was in vain for him to try to evade them now; and, as if to render his efforts to that effect still more nugatory, the bright, broad, harvest moon broke forth on a sudden from the thick clouds that shrouded her, and lit up the scenes all around with a radiance like that of mid-day.

"Step in, holy fathers! step in! quick! quick!" said he, in a gruff, surly tone, after they had told him the same tale in the very same words as the three others who had passed previously.

They entered the boat, and again he pushed off. They had reached the centre of the stream, when he bethought him that it was then a good time to talk of his fee; and resolved to have it, if possible, ere they could escape him.

"But what do you mean to give me for my trouble, holy fathers?" he inquired; "nothing for nothing, you know."

"We shall give you all that we have to bestow," replied one of the monks. "Won't that suffice?"

"But what is that?" asked the sceptical ferryman.

"Nothing," said the monk who had answered him first,—

"But our blessing," interposed the second monk, till then silent.

"Blessing! Bah! That won't do. I can't eat blessings!" responded the grumbling ferryman.

"God will pay you, then," said the third monk: "that will do."

"That won't do, either," answered the enraged Charon. "I'll put back again to Andernach. That I will!"

"Be it so," said the monks.

The poor ferryman put about the head of his boat, and began to row back towards Andernach, as he had threatened to do. He had, however, scarcely made three strokes of the oars, when a high wind sprung up, and the waters of the Rhine began to rise, and rage, and foam like the billows of a storm-vexed sea. Soon a hurricane of the most fearful kind followed, and swept over the chafing face of the stream like the breath of an angry god. The ferryman, in his fifty years' experience of the river,

had never before beheld such a tempest—so dreadful and so sudden. He gave himself up for lost, threw away his oars, and flung himself on his knees, praying most piteously to Heaven for mercy. At that moment two of the dark-robed monks seized the oars which he had abandoned, while the third wrenched one of the thwarts of the boat from its place in the centre. All three then began to belabour the wretched, frightened man with all their might and main, until at length he lay senseless and without motion at the bottom of the boat. The frail bark, which was now veered about, bore them rapidly towards their original destination. The only words that passed on the occasion were an exclamation of the first monk who struck him down.

“Steer your boat aright, my friend,” cried the fiend; “steer your boat aright, if you value your life, and leave off your prayers! What have you to do with God, or God with you?”

When the poor ferryman recovered his senses, day had long dawned, and he was lying alone at the bottom of his boat. He found that he had drifted far below Hammerstein, close to the shore of the right bank of the river; but he could discover no trace of his cruel companions. They had gone, and left nothing behind but the remembrance of his sufferings at their hands. With much difficulty he rowed up the river, and reached the shore. He then took to his bed for a full week, during which time he could not move a limb, such was the severity of the treatment he had received from these treacherous monks.

When he regained his health, he learned from a gossiping neighbour, that, as he returned from Neuwied late that night, or rather early the next morning, he met, just emerging from the Devil's House, a large black chariot running on three huge wheels drawn by four horses without heads. In that vehicle he saw six monks seated *vis-a-vis*, apparently enjoying their morning ride. The driver, a curious-looking carl, with a singularly long nose, took, he said, the road along the edge of the river, and continued lashing his three coal-black, headless steeds at a most tremendous rate, until a sharp turn hid them altogether from his view.

There were many speculations afloat as to what these strange

appearances could portend; but few doubted that they had reference to the Reformation, and the servile war which shortly after ensued.

JUDGMENT.

The count of Neuwied, who built the edifice now known as the Devil's House, was, according to tradition, an extravagant spendthrift who contrived, long ere he reached the limits of man's natural life, to squander away every part of his substance that could be alienated from his house and family. Still, however, by some strange mystery which none could fathom, while he lived, he had always abundance of means to riot and waste even after all his available property was gone,—a fact which excited much curiosity and considerable speculation among his acquaintance and dependants. This castle of Friedrichstein was his favourite abode; and within its walls were held his wildest orgies. His disconsolate wife and his two sons, however, always resided at Neuwied, and never entered within the precincts of this house of sin until that wicked husband and father had departed from this world. He died at the palace of Neuwied, whither he had been removed on the first attack of his last illness; and he was buried in the sepulchre of his sires with all due honours. There were few wet eyes at his funeral.

“And now, my dear mother,” spake the reigning count of Neuwied, the eldest son of the defunct profligate,—“and now, my dear mother, it behoves me to look after our gear, and to get together all the scattered remnants of our property, which my poor father's profusion has not been of power to touch; as well as to make the most of the little that may be left of what his hands have passed through. Alas! I fear it is but little indeed. So I shall even set out to-night for that den of crime, Friedrichstein, and set my seals upon all I find there.”

The weeping matron blessed her boy, and bade him depart in peace. His brother would fain have accompanied him; but he persuaded him to remain with their mother. This scene

occurred in the palace of Neuwied the evening of the day on which the deceased count had been interred.

"Count! count!" croaked a wretched-looking old woman, who sat close to the gate of Friedrichstein,— "count! count! you are welcome; you are just come in time: there 'll be gay goings-on within there the night. You'll see your sire and his merry men all, in their pride and their glory! Ah, me! what rare sport there will be there, truly! Ha! ha! ha! ha!"

The withered crone chuckled as she concluded her greeting, even as a raven or some other foul and ominous bird of death and darkness. The young count of Neuwied, who had just then reined in his foaming steed at the portal of the castle, looked at her for a moment with indignation and surprise; those feelings, however, soon passed away; for he thought she was crazed, as well as poverty-stricken—an object of pity more than of anger—and he therefore alighted without making her any answer, or taking the least notice of her ravings.

"Ho! warder, ho!" he shouted aloud; "hither to the gate; ho! hither! ho!"

The massive leaves of the huge gate were at once flung wide at this summons; but it seemed to his astonished sense as if they moved by magic, for no human being was visible in the vicinity besides the antiquated crone. The prince entered; the gates slammed to behind him with a crash like a thunder-clap. The court-yard was empty; no soul was to be seen within its compass; no sign of life was visible in any quarter to which he turned his eyes.

"Hilloa! ho! grooms! where be ye, lazy loons that ye are?" shouted the vexed youth. "Here! here! and take my horse at once to stall!"

No grooms, however, appeared to his call; but, wonderful to relate, his snorting steed, who curvetted, and pawed, and champed the bit until his mouth was one mass of foam, as if he was suffering from intense fright, made for the stables of the castle, as if compelled thither by some overmastering but invisible power.

"How is this?" soliloquised the young count. "What can

it mean? Here be no menials, here be no warders, no lights to greet me, no sound or sign of life to glad the eye. Whither have they fled? or is the castle altogether deserted? I cannot understand it; but I'll fathom the cause an I die for it. I will! I will!"

In accordance with this resolution, he entered the great hall, and proceeded toward the banqueting-room, which looked out on the broad Rhine. The interior of the building was pitch dark; and he had to grope his way cautiously through the solitary suite of chambers leading to the apartment he sought.

"Hush! hush!" whispered a voice in his left ear; "hush! hush!"

The count started and looked around; he listened attentively, but he could see nor hear nothing. Deeming the sounds to be only the rush of the night breeze through the deserted galleries, or the creation of imagination produced by solitude and mental excitement, he proceeded on his way, resolutely bent to accomplish his purpose.

"Hush! hush!" again whispered the same voice close beside his right ear. "Hush! hush! hush!"

He now felt the vibration of the breath which uttered the words, against his cheek; and he knew that he could not this time be the sport of fancy, for there was no current of air perceptible in the chamber. That breath, however, was icy cold, like a winter wind from the frozen north, or the exhalations of an opened grave; and it struck a chill to his soul instead of reassuring his spirit.

He persevered, notwithstanding, in his design; and, in pursuance of it, opened a door at the further extremity of the apartment. As he did so, a flood of light suddenly poured out of the adjacent chamber, from a half-open door at the further end. But it was a light unlike aught that he had ever before beheld, or ever until then imagined;—so lurid, so burning, and so unnatural, did it seem to him. He entered the empty chamber.

"Hush! hush! hush!" was again whispered in his ear; "hush! hush! hush!" The sounds were like the hiss of a poisonous serpent.

The count looked round; at his elbow was the aged crone whom he had first encountered on his arrival. His brow darkened

as he glanced on her ; and he made as though he would address her angrily ; but she placed her fore-finger on her skinny lips, and gave him such a fierce glance in return, that he felt wholly unnerved, and appeared to himself to be helplessly in the hands of some supernatural agency.

“ Enter, count,” she said in a hissing whisper — “ enter yon chamber, it is the one you seek. There are rare doings there, I warrant me. Enter ! enter ! Your father is there before you, and his old boon companions too. — Enter ! ”

The terrified young man passed onwards in the direction pointed out to him by the hag : like his own steed erewhile, he seemed to be under the influence of some unseen power, and to act altogether involuntarily.

The scene that presented itself to his eyes, as he stood within the banqueting-hall of his father's castle, deserves a separate and particular description.

At the head of a long table which stretched down the entire length of the room, there appeared to be seated the late Count Frederick of Neuwied, the young man's deceased sire ; on each side of the board, in the places which they were accustomed to occupy during his lifetime, were arranged all those of his profligate companions, the ministers and participators of his ungodly pleasures, who had gone to their account before the death of their patron ; and behind the chair of every one who sat at that table, stood the semblance of a waiting-man,—the whole menial crew seemingly selected from the worst class of domestics once in the service of the departed count. The board was spread with a costly banquet ; and rich wines foamed in flagons, or sparkled in crystal vases, filling its ample space. Through an open door at the opposite extremity of the hall, were seen the long range of kitchens, and the bustle of preparation for the *entre-mets* and the various removes. But this in itself was a sight sufficient to appal the stoutest heart. For the cooks were each and all fiends of hell ; the odours of hell exhaled from that dreadful apartment ; and ever and anon from the mouth of a partially opened oven would gush forth a flood of hellish

light, and a reek of hellish heat, sufficient to poison, and stifle, and blind, a thousand human beings.

The young count was sorely dismayed at this scene ; but he could not retreat from it even had such been his wish, for he felt like one fastened to the spot. A succession of painful thoughts passed rapidly through his mind while he gazed on it : he sorrowed deeply for his sire's awful fate—he could no longer indulge a doubt on the subject ; he sorrowed for the eternal condemnation of so many of his fellow-creatures, once known, and, mayhap, some of them beloved, by him in the days of innocent infancy ; he shuddered with anxiety by reason of his own proximity to these, the outcast of heaven—who will not sympathise with him in such a natural fear ? But a degree of astonishment and intense surprise were the uppermost feelings of his mind, to perceive how little these wretched beings seemed to think of their situation, or how well they appeared to endure its terrible horrors. The banquet proceeded ; the different dishes were partaken of with the *gusto* of human life, and the eagerness of human appetite ; brimming beakers, sparkling to the edge with the choicest wines, were tasted and emptied with a smack which spoke of flavour and delight ; the dead waiting-men moved noiselessly and rapidly behind their masters ; the demon kitchen-servants plied their infernal task with fearful activity and zeal. It was a scene which can scarcely be imagined, still more adequately described—a scene in which all the elements of dread and dismay—the sublime of terror—were combined in the largest possible proportions ; in which all the feelings of disgust and fear, loathing and horror, the human mind is susceptible of, were most abundantly mixed up together. In due time the banquet terminated ; not a word, however, had been uttered by any one during its continuance. The table was then quickly cleared ; the wine alone remained in possession of the board ; the servitors melted into thin air ; only the young count remained, to his own thinking an unnoticed spectator, like Banquo's ghost at the banquet of Macbeth.

A rushing sound was now heard from without ; it was like the hollow voice of the rising wind in the distance when a hurricane is coming on, or the far-off wail of a mourning people

floating heavily on the stirless, stagnant atmosphere of the night. In a moment more the doors and windows of the castle shook violently and then flew wide open ; in another moment hundreds of shadowy forms, male and female, young and old, men, women, and children, rushed into the room pell-mell at every point, spreading themselves over it, and filling up all the unoccupied space in that extensive apartment. They stood, for a second or so, in solemn silence—still as the grave ; but anon they broke out into lamentations, loud, long, and wild,—sad enough to move a heart of stone, and wild enough to terrify the stoutest spirit. These they accompanied with threatening gestures, and fierce motions, and hateful looks, directed towards the deceased prince and his defunct associates. In the meanwhile the objects of all this scorn, and execration, and rage, seemed to suffer every torment which tradition or authority has attributed to, or assigned as, the punishment of the outcast of God—the damned ; they writhed in their seats—they gasped for breath—they tried to shut their eyes on their persecutors—they turned about in every direction to avoid them ; but wherever they turned, there they were, and all efforts to exclude them from their sight served only to multiply their numbers,—to aggravate the intensity of their bitter anger, and increase the anguish of their fearful wailings. On the deceased count, however, the full torrent of this supernatural rage seemed to be almost entirely turned ; and his pangs were, consequently, by far the greatest of all. The heart of his son bled to see him in such deadly agony ; but the poor young man felt that he was wholly powerless to relieve him, or even to withdraw himself from the sight of his sufferings. After a while this scene too ceased ; and a solemn stillness,—a stillness of motion as well as of sound,—succeeded. It was then, and then only, that the young prince perceived any indication which denoted a consciousness of his presence on the part of the actors in this awful drama.

“ Come hither, my son,” spake his dead father, in the tones of the grave,—“ Come hither.”

The young man approached ; but it was by no act of his own volition that he did so ; he felt impelled forward by an irresistible power. He stood before his sire.

“ You may speak now,” pursued the condemned spirit ; “ you

may ask me any questions you will. I must answer them; I am here for the purpose. But be brief; for time wears away, and our hour to depart—to depart to the lowest hell, for ever and ever, quickly approaches.”

Even like a full-leaved aspen tree, when a soft breeze is whispering to it, shook the soul of the young count within him, as his father’s spirit thus spake. However, he mustered courage sufficient to address him.

“How is it with thee, my father?” he inquired hesitatingly, “How farest thou in the other world?—Well or ill? Oh! say.”

“Ill!” replied the wretched sire—“ill! I am damned for ever!”

“For ever!—for ever!—for ever!”—echoed the companions of his guilt,—his guests at this awful banqueting.

“For ever!—for ever!—ever!—ever!—ever!”—murmured the shadowy crowd which stood around—a countless throng—in dying cadences.

“And these?” pursued the young count, pointing to the agonised accomplices of his sire’s profligacy—“And these? Are they——”

“Damned also!” responded the spirit, “for ever!—and ever!—and ever!”

“For ever! and ever! and ever!”—again responded these hapless beings. The agony of ages was traceable in every lineament of their care-worn countenances, as the unceasing, never-dying pangs of thought flashed across them, like lightning over the storm-lashed face of the winter ocean.

“For ever!—and ever!—and ever!—ever!—ever!—ever!” again echoed the expiring voices of the shadowy throng behind and around about them.

“And these?” the young count proceeded, pointing at the same time to the dense crowd of stationary shadows, “Are they too damned?”

“Listen!” replied the spirit of his sire, “Listen! These are my vassals—my serfs. I spent their substance, and I spent their blood: in wickedness and in riot I spent them: with their property, which I deprived them of on no fair pretext, with their sweat and their toil, which I compelled unrighteously and

unjustly, I built this abode of sin—this stronghold of Satan—to be the selected spot for my abominable pleasures. They have all passed away from the earth;—most of them by my direct agency—all by the indirect means to which my excesses contributed: they are now in a state of transition from purgatory to paradise. But it hath permitted the Lord to make them my accusing spirits; and until the hour of their release shall I suffer the additional pangs of their presence.”

“But,” spake the young count, in some sort incredulously too, “how is it that if you be damned, you burn not? Surely the Lord saith, that whoso is damned, shall burn with hell-fire.”

“Touch but my finger-point with the tip of your fore-finger—touch it as lightly as you can,” replied the condemned spirit.

The count put forth his hand and touched it accordingly. The touch he gave was so light that it was not of strength to brush the down off the tiniest moth's wing; but it was all-sufficient for the purpose. A burning sensation shot at once up his arm—the stroke of a forked shaft of lightning could not be quicker or fiercer. The pain produced by it was so intolerable, that the young man's senses began to wander with the excess of his agony: he raved—he reeled—he tottered—he fell to the ground bereft of strength and sensation.

“Be warned by my fate,” were the last words he heard—they were uttered by his father, and came on his failing ear like the rush of a mighty torrent,—the roar of many waters—“Fear God—harm not the poor—protect your subjects—and discourage wickedness. For neglecting these things am I doomed to hell-fire for ever!

“For ever! and ever! and ever!” moaned the fearful guests, “for ever! and ever! and ever!”

“For ever! and ever! and ever!” echoed the diapason of wailing shadows, “ever! and ever! and ever!”

When the youth awoke, it was broad day. He lay in the outer court of the castle, and his steed stood ready-caparisoned beside him. The edifice was empty and desolate: only the sighing wind was heard in its solitary halls and tenantless corridors. It might be that the count, for a moment, thought

of the past as of a painful dream, or deemed it only the sport of a too fervid fancy; but the burning pangs he felt in his hand and arm assured him of its reality, and as they shot through his frame like wild-fire, he could not doubt that he had witnessed a judgment of God. He returned to Neuwied at a slow pace, and

“ A sadder and a wiser man
He rose the morrow morn.”

Since then, the castle of Friedrichstein, say the peasant tradition-mongers of the contiguous shores, has fallen into ruin. From this and other similar circumstances, of subsequent occurrence, it has obtained its present appellative—the Devil's House.

NEUWIED.

At some distance above the Devil's House, on the same side of the river, stands the modern town of Neuwied. It offers a striking proof of what the spirit of religious tolerance may effect, if properly developed and rightly directed. Neuwied was founded in 1733, by the Count Frederick William of that name, who opened it as an asylum for the persecuted of all creeds. The result of this enlightened and liberal policy was a degree of prosperity, unparalleled since the decadence of the great commercial cities on the Rhine in the latter end of the middle ages. The sovereignty of this little state has been mediatised, and the sovereign has been rewarded with the title of prince in requital for the relinquishment of his independence. Neuwied possesses many attractions to the intelligent stranger: but the principal, perhaps, are to be found in the remains of Roman antiquities discovered in its vicinity, believed to be the site of the ancient city of Victoria; and the flourishing establishment of the Herrn-hunters or Moravian brethren, which still subsists there in all its primitive integrity.

The history of Neuwied is the annals of prosperity for a period of a hundred years: and its perusal affords a practical lesson of the advantages of religious liberality, and of a mild, paternal government. But there is nothing of sufficient interest in it beyond what has been just related, to obtain it further place in these pages, and we shall, therefore, recross the Rhine.

Passing over the space intermediate between that river and the convent and lake of Laach, a little way in the interior of the country, behind Andernach, we shall at once introduce the reader to that romantic spot, and its wild and wondrous associations.

LAACH.

Although Laach, strictly speaking, is scarcely within the scope of this work, treating as it does of the Rhine shores alone, it is still so closely connected with it by situation as well as by circumstances, that to pass it by unnoticed, might be justly deemed the omission of ignorance, or of wilful neglect.

"Leaving Wapanach," writes a young author,* "behind us, we again toiled up to a great height through woods and corn-fields. The woods which surround the Laacher See are royal forest-lands, and are of very great extent; they contain much game; deer and wild boars are abundant in them. When we reached the skirts of this forest, we turned round, and resting on our staffs, enjoyed the magnificent view which this elevated spot commanded. In the distance was the high chain of the Westerwald, to which we looked across the charming valley of the Rhine. To the north, were the towering tops of the Seven Mountains, with the singular basalt-capped hills of the Hochwald, speaking plainly of their violent and igneous birth; behind us were the Eifel mountains, on a small branch of which we stood; at our feet wound a little valley, deep sunk between the richly wooded and precipitous hills we had ascended.

"Having gazed on this landscape for a few minutes, we entered the wood; and, descending for a short distance, came upon the Laacher See. It would be impossible for me to describe the astonishment I felt, even though prepared for the scene that opened upon me. I had just climbed to a great height, and but a few moments before had been gazing upon distant valleys far beneath me, yet here I stood beside the blue expanse of an inland sea. It appeared to be the effect of magic, and I felt utterly confounded.

* Mrs. Trollope's son, in that lady's pleasing volumes, "Belgium and Western Germany in 1833." John Murray.

“ The lake is a mile and a half long, and a mile wide;* it is surrounded on all sides by hills, without any visible outlet. To the north and east, these hilly banks are very steep, and beautifully wooded to the water's edge, and the pendent boughs dip themselves in the lake. To the west, the bank rises more gradually, and pastures border the water, reaching upward to the noble forest, which here also crowns the summit with a most luxuriant growth. To the south, are bare, uncultivated peaks, which proclaim a volcanic origin; and their sterile nakedness contrasts finely with the rich foliage and smiling meadows which surround the lake on the other side. Vast masses of lava lie scattered round; and I have no doubt that they are right, who in this mountain-lake think they discover the crater of an extinct volcano.

“ The accounts given respecting its waters differ: while some assert that neither the heaviest rains nor the longest droughts ever cause them to rise or fall an inch; others relate that the inhabitants of the monastery on its edge were once nearly overwhelmed by their sudden swell. This lake is of great depth,—some say it has never been fathomed; and the peasants all declare that bottom it has none.† The waters are quite clear, and as blue as the middle of the Atlantic.”

To this graphic and spirited description it may be added, that the lake of Laach is fed by three thousand springs, according to the rather questionable statement of Schreiber: that the atmosphere which exhales from it is unfavourable to the existence of animal life: and that its waters, having no natural outlet, are drawn off, in seasons of superabundance, through a subterraneous canal, constructed by the monks of the adjacent monastery, in the fourteenth century.

This monastery is very well deserving the notice of the traveller. It was founded in the year 1093, by a certain Henry of Laach, count of Lorraine, who was also *Palatinus Primus*, or Chief Paladin, of the Rhine. The strict rule of

* Others make it a mile and an eighth long, and a mile and a half broad.

† The depth is generally stated to be 214 feet; but there are some parts deeper even than that.

St. Benedict was adopted by its occupants. For ages the hospitality of the monks of Laach was famous all over the surrounding country ; and, perhaps, never was the cenobitical system carried out more advantageously to the community at large than during the long period it was possessed by those excellent men. Up to the time of the first French Revolution, their benevolence continued in full activity ; but that great political earthquake, which shook society and morals to their very centre—overthrowing, like every other convulsion, the good and the bad, and confounding them together in one indiscriminate heap of wreck and ruin—overthrew also the organisation of this society. The monastery was first forcibly secularised, and then it was sold to the highest bidder who felt disposed to risk his money in that season of universal insecurity and general fear. So much for the real : now for the legendary and traditional connected with the beautiful scenery of this lake and its circumscribing valley.

THE SUNKEN CASTLE.

Two wanderers stood on the shores of the lake of Laach, at the close of a bright summer's day. They had come from far distant lands ; and they discoursed together in the light of the setting sun on the lovely scene which lay stretched out before them, and of the traditions which had their abode beneath the surface of those transparent waters.

“ Yonder fair lake,” spake the senior of the twain,—“ yonder fair lake flows over the castle of a chieftain who was great and powerful in days of yore.”

“ Yea,” replied his companion, “ and a proud castle it was too, with its towers, and its bulwarks, and its battlements. It stood on a high hill in the centre of the valley—an object of wonderment and amaze to all strangers—of dread and dismay to all dwellers beneath its shadows, on which side soever they fell.”

“ Truly,” resumed the senior, “ and many wild tales they tell of the last lord thereof. Listen while I relate one of them.”

The younger wanderer bowed his head in silent acquiescence. Both seated themselves on the green turf, beneath the

branches of a spreading oak, a spot which looked out over lake, and valley, and mountain. The elder then began.

“ The lord of that castle, it is related, was a bold and a bad man—one who made his fellow-men his prey—who sported with their miseries—who delighted in their distresses—who gloated over their ruin. He was a notorious Raub-Ritter;* and rapes, murder, robbery, and marauding of every kind were his constant amusement. Every one hated him; even those who were his agents and accomplices in sin and crime held him in detestation: the oppressor of the poor, the plunderer of the rich, the terror of the church; he was abhorred of all, and none loved him. In seasons of scarcity he would drive his starving serfs from the castle-gate with blows, when they went thither to beg a morsel of food: nay, he would even let loose his hounds on them, and urge them to tear the hapless wretches to pieces. No wealthy way-farer passed through his territory without being stripped of the greatest portion of his property, if not the entire of it: even the voice of the church—though nearly all-potential at that period with mankind—had no power with him: for he stopped not to revile the clergy, or, still worse, to seize whatever of their goods he could lay his unholy hands upon.

“ At the further side of the lake there also stood, ages ago, another castle; it existed at the same time with the Sunken Schloss of Laach, and occupied the brow of the opposite hill. Between the lord of this stronghold and the lord of Laach there existed that kind of friendship which springs only from a community of evil deeds. In a season of famine which fell on the valleys and the highlands of the beautiful shores of the Rhine and the contiguous country, it was the custom of these wicked men to visit each other in chariots formed solely of bread, for the purpose of playing at nine-pins with large loaves; the wretched, starving serfs who witnessed this wanton waste the while, not daring to touch a crumb that fell to the ground, under pain of immediate death, at the hands of the well-fed retainers who guarded them. Many of them, however, braving the terrors of death to satisfy the immediate

• A Robber-Knight.

cravings of appetite, were cut down at once by orders of these fiends in human shape. Thus lived the Lord of Laach.

“It was on an evening in summer—just such an evening as this;—the sun had set in a sea of golden clouds; the bright yellow moon uprose in the east, filling the beautiful valley with her mellow light; the air of heaven was pure and balmy; the earth reposed like an infant asleep; only the song of the love-lorn nightingale was audible in the leaves, or the gentle wooing of the zephyr as he breathed through the rustling foliage, when the Lord of Laach sat in the highest turret of his proud castle. He sat there alone, and looked out on all below him; and he boasted to himself that what he beheld was his. But he felt no pleasure thereat; for the wicked know but scant joy; and the peace of virtue, and wisdom, and godliness, had departed from his soul for ever. As thus he sate in the solemn silence of the night, he heard a loud screaming, as of many birds of evil omen, in the still heaven above his head; he turned his eyes upwards, and behold! a flock of ravens were floating over the castle-roof, and covering all between him and the sky with a dense living cloud. They then took to flight, but they flew not far: high up in middle air they hung—a portentous speck upon the deep moonlit blue of ether. A crash—a rush—a rumbling noise, like the sound of thunder in the mountains, quickly followed their flight. The terrified wretch felt that his hour had come. He flung himself on the ground; he supplicated mercy; he prayed for pardon, as the massive masonry of his *fortalice* rocked and reeled about with him like a cock-boat on a convulsed ocean. He shrieked aloud in his mortal agony; he tore his hair for the fear of death; he bit his hands in his madness; he was wild with affright, for he fancied to see the forms of all those who had suffered at his hands preparing to fasten on his perishing soul. But shrieks and supplications, agony and remorse, madness and despair, were alike unavailing;—his doom had gone forth; the vengeance of an offended God was let loose upon him, even as he had often loosed his hounds on the starving poor: for him there was no salvation here, and, it may be, hereafter;—no hope—no prospect—no chance.

“The affrighted inhabitants of the valley saw the next

morning a broad lake where had stood the high hill, castle-crowned, of their lordly oppressor but the evening before:—hill and castle had sunk in the earth ere the night had sped over, and ‘left not a wrack behind.’ ”

“It is a fearful tale,” said the younger wanderer; “but I have heard the legend of that castle and its wicked lord differently related.”

“Tell it then,” said his companion.

“The Lord of that Raub-nest,”* pursued the junior accordingly, “was a wild and a wicked man. It may be that he was the same as him whose story you have just narrated; it may be that he was before or that he lived after him: but be that as it may, a wild and a wicked man—a godless tyrant—a truthless friend—a disloyal baron—was he. Nothing was too hot or too heavy for his rapacious hands; nothing too sacred for his filthy gratification. On one occasion he robbed the altar of God; on another, he tore from her convent sanctuary and ravished by violence a vowed nun. Plunder was his pleasure; murder his pastime; and all evil deeds gave him delight. It is true that he would do penance for his sacrilege, when the church was too strong for him; and it is equally true that he restored the ravished nun to the convent, when he discovered that she was his own sister; but for all the murders he had committed, for all the rapine he had done, for all the injuries he had inflicted on his fellow-men, he never repented; and he continued the same dreadful career of wickedness, and sin, and crime to the last hour of his existence.

“Well, as the old story runs, one morning—it was the morning of a day on which a banquet was to be given by him in his strong castle—the cook who had sent to the fisher for fish, received, instead of an eel, a silver-bellied serpent of a species altogether unknown in this country. It was, however, so like an eel, that it seemed next to impossible to distinguish the one from the other; and the cook dressed it for dinner accordingly. Of all the guests at the banquet that day, the lord of

* Robber-den.

the castle alone partook of this dish. You shall hear what happened to him therefore.

“He had no sooner eaten of it than he became aware of an entirely new faculty existent in his mind: he discovered that he could understand the language of animals, and found himself perfectly well acquainted with the meaning of all the sounds which they emitted. A proud man and a vain was he of this knowledge, and much he prided himself on its acquisition. But he did not solely possess it; for the servant-man who had waited at table, had also tasted of this wonderful food; and, equally with his master, he too acquired this wondrous faculty.

“It was, however, a fearful knowledge for the Lord of Laach, and one that he had been far better off without possessing. In every twitter of the little birds—in the low of the cattle, the bleat of the innocent lambs, the grunt of the swine, the crow of the house-cock, the chirp of the sparrow, the gabble of the turkey, the hiss of the goose—in short, in the natural sounds of all animals, tame and wild, which he encountered, he heard alone of his crimes and of their probable punishment; thus almost every hour of his existence was now embittered by those unconscious monitors of his evil deeds. The agony he endured was intense; he did not, however, amend his life even for that; but persevered in his wicked courses with the same dogged audacity as before.

“‘It is so hot!’ he exclaimed to himself, as he walked one morning in the gardens of his castle, to catch the balmy breeze of the newly-awakened day; ‘Methinks that the place is ventilated with the vapours of hell. Ugh! Ugh! Where shall I find coolness and repose? My very heart burns within me.’

“‘My lord!’ stammered forth a menial, booted and spurred, and travel-stained, as though he had ridden all night on an errand of life and death—‘My lord! my lord! your sweet sister is dead. She expired last evening. She never held up her head since that ——’

“The Lord of Laach beat his breast in the bitterness of his grief, and sought his chamber to hide the overpowering emotions of his conscience. As he hastened through the garden-walks, he heard his name in every bush: the little birds

all warbled forth a pæan of the impending vengeance of God upon his ruthless life, and exulted in the speedy punishment of his hideous deeds. In the poultry-yard of the castle, through which he passed for greater privacy, he became aware of an awful commotion among its feathered occupants. For a moment he listened to a dialogue between 'a solitary sparrow on the house-top' and a maternal dove who sat brooding in her cote over an unfledged generation of little bipeds.

" 'And is it even so?' twittered the sparrow—'Is it even so, in good truth?'

" 'Ay, in truth,' answered the cooing dove; 'in good truth, it is.' 'Twit! twit!' cried the sparrow; 'Yon is the man.'

" The dove looked down and saw the Lord of Laach.

" 'Ay! ay!' cooed the pretty creature, 'there is the wretch. His measure is full—his race is run—his hours are numbered—yea, his very minutes are counted. In one short hour will this castle and all within it—he, and they, and every living thing, be swallowed up in the earth; and over it shall roll the ceaseless, sounding waters.'

" The servant of the Lord of Laach had overheard, as he stood at the barn-door, the story of the dove. On this he up and told to his master all that he knew; and to his subsequent questions, he admitted how he came by the knowledge.

" 'Speed thee! speed thee!' cried the Lord of Laach, 'speed thee! and saddle quick my bravest steed! Lose not a moment!—No, stay! Get ye together all my valuables! I'll saddle the roan horse myself.'

" The steed stood at the stable-door, and the Lord of Laach, fully equipped, stood beside him.

" 'Here,' he spake to his servant, 'here, hand me that casket.'

" He took the proffered casket, then leaped lightly into his saddle.

" 'Oh, master! master! take me along with you,' shrieked the terrified menial; 'let me not perish here, I pray you!—I conjure you! The sun just dips—once gone, and it is all over with us—take me with you! take me! take me!'

" The Lord of Laach answered nothing to this agonising appeal; he sat in his saddle, as if spell-bound, and looked

eagerly to the west, and saw the tip of the declining sun touching the verge of the horizon.

“ ‘ For the sake of Him who made us all—for the sake of that God who suffered for us—for the sake of the Heaven which we should every one seek—for the sake of that mercy which you hope for hereafter—leave me not here to perish ! ’ thus anxiously prayed the servant to his master. The Lord of Laach was still silent and immovable.

“ The sun had sunk ; the last line of its margin had just been dipped from view beneath the intervenient horizon. Up in his stirrups then stood the Lord of Laach, and thus outspake he to his prostrate menial :—

“ ‘ You would learn to know what the animals say,’—he gnashed his teeth as he spoke,—‘ you would be as wise as I am and as great—save yourself, then, I’ll not aid you—you stir not hence with me. To hell with ye ! ’

“ Setting spurs to his pawing steed as he spoke this cruel speech, he urged him on with might and main to the open portals of the castle.

“ ‘ Well, then,’ shrieked the terrified wretch who so vainly supplicated his vile master’s mercy, ‘ an you go, then you shall go with me. We leave this together, or here stay to perish.’

“ Ere the Lord of Laach could leap from his horse, or extricate himself from the desperate embrace of that despairing man, the hour of retribution had arrived. A crash—a flash—and a shock like that of an earthquake followed one another in rapid succession ; and the Castle of Laach then sunk down for ever in the fathomless abyss which suddenly yawned to swallow it.

“ ‘ The waters wild ’ have surged over the spot ever since. Often of a still evening the mournful voices of the wind and wave commingled sound like a solemn dirge for the long departed.”

“ Such is the vulgar belief,” spake a deep voice close to the wanderers’ ears ; “ error ever finds votaries ; and the human heart is, unhappily, too prone to credit the evil tale rather than the good. Alas ! alas ! for poor human nature.”

They both looked up at the speaker, and started with surprise. Well might they start too : for he had come unperceived, and his aspect was one wholly unfamiliar to their eyes. Tall, grave, dignified, and imposing ; as that aged man stood before them, he seemed to their imagination like an incarnation of the traditions of ages—a representative of the unforgotten past ; and they felt a veneration and an awe in his presence which they could not account for, even if they were ever so well inclined to subtilise on its origin. They rose at once, and paid him the reverence due to his age and venerable appearance.

“ Such,” he repeated, on returning their greeting,—“ such is the vulgar belief. Alas ! alas ! that it should be so.”

“ But say, father,” asked the younger of the twain,—“ say what is the truth ?”

“ We are here but to learn the lessons of wisdom,” interposed the elder. “ Be, then, our teacher, an you will, most reverend sire.”

“ Man should be slow to judge,” resumed the noble-looking old man ; “ he should weigh well before he pronounces sentence on his fellows, past, present, or to come. Listen to my words. Give ear to the truth.”

The twain reseated themselves, according to his desire, on the green-sward ; the “ ancient of days ” stood over them in the attitude of an apostle.

“ The Lord of Laach,” he then went on, “ was a just and a good man. Old stories tell us that he was of a pure and a noble race ; and old songs sing that he was a famous minstrel, as well as a stalwart knight ; one who loved poesy more than pleasure ; and whose delight was in diffusing happiness all around him.”

“ How different,” spake both his auditors at the same moment,—“ how different from what we have heard !”

“ But,” continued the old man, not regarding the interruption, “ his soul was plunged in the deepest sorrow, and a dense cloud of care always o’ershadowed his lofty brow. Why it was so no man knew, and it boots not now to tell. Suffice it to say, it was not the recollection of misdeeds which troubled his mind, nor the workings of remorse which altered the traits of his clear countenance. Now, mark.”

The wanderers bent an eager ear to catch the words of the venerable narrator.

"In yon lake, which then surrounded his insulated dwelling," he pursued,—“insulated, for that it stood on a lonely island in the very centre of it—in that lake dwell fond spirits innumerable, in grottoes of crystal and caverns of transparent spar; meads of asphodel and amaranth stretch before them; bowers of beautiful form and hue every where invite them to pleasure and repose. Well, these fair spirits grudging to earth the possession of such song as the Lord of Laach produced, in the depths of his solitude, undermined the basis of his rocky abode, eat away its foundations, and drew down gently to the lowermost depths of their subaqueous abode the island, the castle, the poet, and all that was contained within the compass of that lovely spot. An eddy on the face of yon smooth deep points out the place where it once stood, ages long ago; and when the moon is up and the wind is hushed, on a still summer eve, the voice of song from the happy beings below there may still be heard stealing over the bosom of the sleeping waters.”

“Oh! for the happiness to hear but the echo of such celestial melody,” spake the younger wanderer. “To list it, and cease to live.”

“If it were but conceded to us to hearken for a moment only the sound of such unearthly song,” spake the elder of the twain, “I ——”

“The moon rises!” abruptly interposed the sonorous voice of the ancient stranger. “Like a good man emerging from sorrow and deep grief, she comes forth in the darkness, shedding her chastened light over all below. Behold!”

The travellers looked; they beheld the broad, bright harvest moon surmount the distant hills; they saw her yellow light flood the lonely valley in which they stood, and form a radiant track on the glistening lake they looked over. A sound, as of many distant harps, then stole on their senses; a commingling of innumerable sweet echoes overcame them; they grew rapt with the transcendent melody which poured in upon them from every side; they became tranced; their faculties were taken prisoners; their souls were wafted away to a higher and a happier sphere; they were “lapped in Elysium.” What time this beatitude

lasted they knew not, nor could they guess; but the spell was broken by the passage of a gigantic shadow, whose head touched the heavens, over the placid bosom of the still waters of the lake.

They looked to their ancient instructor for an explanation of the same; he was gone—how, or when, or whither, they knew not.

Such is the legend of Laach.

HOCHE'S MONUMENT.

Returning to the shores of the Rhine, and proceeding upwards against the stream, the monument of General Hoche—an ill-formed obelisk—is seen, erected upon a rising ground, commanding a wide reach of the river, and forming a prominent point of view for a great distance around. It is inscribed to his memory by the army of the Sambre and the Meuse. Hoche was a man of high military skill, notwithstanding the miserable failure of his attempt upon Ireland; but the story of his career belongs not to these, but to the pages of French history. He lies buried at Coblenz.

ROMERSDORF.

Romersdorf, on the opposite side of the Rhine, was originally the site of a Roman camp (*Villa Romana*), whence its German name. On a hill, in the rear of the town, are the remains of a Roman entrenchment, at the commencement of the *Heyden-graben*, or Heathen's Dyke, which stretches a considerable distance inland, and terminates close by Biberich. The ancient Abbey of Romersdorf was one of the most powerful on the shores of the river. It has long since been secularised.

ENGERS.

Engers, or Kuno-Engers, a little above Romersdorf, towards Coblentz, is stated by Freyherus, in his "Commentaries on the Moselle of Ausonius," to have been the site of a camp, castle, station, or resting-place, of the Emperor Constantine. He further says that it was originally called Constantine-Engers, corrupted into Kuno-Engers, the name it now generally bears, in consequence of its classical origin. But accurate old *Merian** tells a different story of its foundation; and one, too, which redounds quite as much, if not more, to the credit of his native country.

"In the year of our Lord 1371," he proceeds, "when the brave and bold Kuno von Falkenstein was archbishop of Treves, and lord, in right of that see, of a large portion of the Rhine in this neighbourhood, a convoy of merchants from the Netherlands, on their way to the great fair of Franckfort, were attacked on the river by a strong force commanded by the Counts of Wied and Isenberg, and despoiled of all their property, amounting to the value of four thousand guilders. Kuno, who appreciated the advantages of a free traffic through his states — perhaps being also desirous of a pretext to crush the power of these formidable nobles — on learning the intelligence of this foray, at once undertook an expedition against them for redress. This expedition was attended with the fullest success: the robber counts were humbled and disgraced; the stolen property was restored; and the navigation of the river freed from all further molestation. To control them the more effectually in the future, the archbishop caused the Castle of Engers, called after him in the lapse of time Kuno-Engers, to be erected; and the village of Engers, which subsequently took the same name, soon sprang up around it."

SAYN.

A little further upwards, on a steep acclivity, washed by the waters of the Sayn, and overlooking the mighty Rhine,

* Topog. Archiep. Mogunt. Trevir. Colon. fol. 1646.

stand the shattered towers of the once lordly castle of Sayn. These extensive ruins are believed to bear date from the tenth century; and tradition ascribes their erection to a Count of Sayn, famous for his feats of arms against the Saracens. Some recollections of his life have been preserved. This is one of them:—

JUST IN TIME.

“As the Count of Sayn lay abed one night beside his young and lovely bride, to whom he had been but recently espoused, lo and behold!” says the legend, “he saw an angel from heaven hover over his head, who bade him go forth from the home of his fathers for seven long years, to the rescue of the Holy Sepulchre from the hands of the infidels. In the morning the will of God was communicated by him to his wife; and he seriously set about preparing for his immediate departure. His preparations completed, he committed his beloved bride to the safe keeping of a fond and noble friend, giving him also power over his lands and vassals in his absence; he then set out on his distant and perilous journey accompanied by an ample train of followers.

“Seven years had wellnigh passed and gone. The Count of Sayn lay beneath the shadow of a palm-tree on the far-off plains of Palestine; the few of his vassals whom the wars had spared reposed around him; they all slept away the noon-tide heat in this grateful, cool spot. As he slept, lo and behold! the same angel, who had bade him go forth from home, appeared to him again to his view, in the vision of a dream, and telling him that his pilgrimage had now expired: the heavenly herald commanded him to rise at once, and return without delay to the shores of the Rhine. Without delay he accordingly arose, and at once set out on his journey. In due time he reached the vicinity of his own dwelling.

“Now, it so happened that, as he approached the Castle of Sayn, he encountered several groups of people hastening thither

also: some gay, as though on a holyday excursion; others grave, as though engaged on weighty business; while a third party, evidently mendicants, seemed looking out for proviant for the day, content to find it without caring for the morrow. Joining in with the latter, he ascertained that on that very night his ladye was to be wedded to his friend; for that the seven years of his stay had expired on the previous evening, and that he was therefore believed to be dead. They soon reached the castle, which was alive with preparation for the approaching nuptials. The count, disguised as a palmer, took up his station with the mendicant crew whom he had accompanied thither in a corner of the inner court-yard.

“ ‘Tell your noble ladye,’ said he to the almoner who came round with the dole customary on such occasions— ‘tell her that a poor palmer from Palestine would fain speak one word with her.’

“ The priest retired to execute this errand; but the ladye was not to be spoken with: at that moment she was approaching the altar to wed his rival. Such was the answer he received. He now hastened to the chapel; in the tumult, he entered it entirely unperceived. The chaplain stood at the altar; the expectant pair stood before him; the bride radiant with beauty; the bridegroom on tip-toe with hope and expectation. In a corner of the chapel, hidden behind a massive pillar, crouched the Count of Sayn. The priest spake the nuptial ceremony— his hand was put forth to place the wedding-ring on the ladye’s finger. At that moment the sound of song was heard in the sacred place. It was a song which the ladye well remembered, and which she knew was known to none but her lost husband. She could not repress her emotions; she fell senseless at the altar-foot; and the nuptials were postponed to the next day in consequence of her agitation.

“ Not so, however, the banquet; that proceeded as if nothing had happened. The fair dame, who had now partially recovered, headed the table; seated beside her was her intended bridegroom. Again did the Count of Sayn obtain admission to their presence, in the bustle and excitement of the hour and

the circumstance, and again did he stand before his wife and his friend in the garb of a mendicant pilgrim.

“ ‘Ladye,’ he spake, approaching the head of the table, where she sate in graceful pride—‘ladye, give me a cup of wine, for God’s sake!’

“ The menial crew would have chased the poor petitioner from the hall; but the gentle dame forbade them to touch him: she then complied with his request, and poured him out a beaker of the generous beverage with her own fair hands.

“ ‘Here’s to the health of the Count of Sayn!’ said the palmer, raising his voice to its highest pitch, and drinking deeply of the foaming cup.—‘Ladye, will you pledge me?’

“ He handed her the wine-cup as he spoke, and she took it freely from his hand. He had, however, contrived to drop his signet-ring in the vessel before he gave it to her. She swallowed the draught in silence; but the ring remained in her mouth.

“ ‘My husband!’ she cried, giving him one searching look, and then flinging herself in his extended arms.

“ ‘My friend!’ exclaimed the bridegroom elect, kneeling at the poor palmer’s feet.

“ ‘Forgive us! forgive us!’ supplicated both in the most touching accents—‘forgive! forgive!’

“ The guests and the vassals thronged around the group, and made the welkin ring with the boisterous greeting they gave their master.

“ Raising the suppliants, the good-natured count embraced and forgave them; then, taking his rightful place at the board, the remainder of the night was spent in true German conviviality.”

The legend adds, very judiciously, that “he never afterwards opened his lips on the subject, either in reproach or pleasantry; but preserved an inviolate silence to the end of a long and happy life.”

NIEDERWÖRTH.

The beautiful island of Niederwörth lies in the centre of the Rhine, a little distance above Sayn on the one side and Sebastian-Engers on the other. It is the last point before reaching Coblentz, where Legend still lingers and Tradition tells its wondrous tale.

Niederwörth was the site and property of a famous nunnery in times past, which for ages served as a retreat for noble ladies from all parts of the German empire. The conventual edifice was, however, destroyed, and its inmates scattered, by the first French Revolution: only the church attached to it is still in existence. A Lord of Helfenstein, according to the most authentic accounts, was the founder of the structure, about the middle of the thirteenth century. But there are vague traditions afloat of the island having been the abode of certain fair recluses, at least eight centuries previous to that period; and it is even said that the convent then built was erected on the ruins of a former and far more ancient edifice. It is of those ladies, that era, and this edifice, that the subsequent legend treats.

SALVATION.

“In ancient days—centuries before the foundation of the last nunnery was laid in Niederwörth,” it proceeds to say (A. D. 1246), “a convent of noble German maidens existed on that lovely little island. They were twelve in number exclusive of the superior. At this period, the Huns under Attila, ‘the Scourge of God,’ devastated Europe: the Rhine was not unvisited by them. The barbarians were then encamped on the Neckar; and their approach to Coblentz was momentarily expected. It is far easier to fancy than to tell the horror of the fair recluses of Neiderwörth at the nearness of such ruthless neighbours. The first suggestion which offered itself was escape; and they took counsel with each other to effect it: but whither could they go? Where might they not expect to encounter the formidable foe from whom they fled? Poor

maidens! In this their dire extremity, they betook themselves to prayer; and from sun-down to midnight on the Sabbath eve did they remain on their knees in the chapel of the convent, pouring forth the wishes of their gentle hearts, and supplicating the assistance of that God who never yet deserted those that put their trust in him. It was a touching sight to see their sorrowful but still most lovely countenances, lit up by the dim lamps of the holy place, turned upwards in faith and hope to the Father of Heaven; and it was happiness to hear the rich, deep, tremulous melody of their soft, sweet voices, as they raised them in a perfect chorus of thanksgiving and praise for his protection.

“Just as the midnight hour had ceased sounding from the turret of the cloister, a loud knocking was heard at the outer gate. The sisters started from their knees, and looked aghast. They deemed it was the enemy, whom they dreaded ~~for~~ more than death; and for a moment their confidence in the protecting power of Heaven was sadly shaken. But it was only for a moment; for the porteress, whose duty it was to watch at the wicket, ran speedily into the chapel to tell the abbess that a poor old man alone had alarmed them, and that he had come to pray shelter from the storm which raged fearfully without.

“‘Let him be at once admitted!’ said the abbess. ‘Be he friend or be he foe, in such a night as this he shall have it.’

“A venerable, grey-headed, long-bearded ancient, garbed in a long, dark, flowing robe, soon after entered the chapel.

“‘Father,’ said the abbess, ‘you are welcome. We pray to God for succour. Will you join with us?’

“‘Willingl’ replied the old man, ‘most willingly.’

“They prayed fervently together; their orison over, the sisters, headed by the superior, sought the refectory of the convent. Their ancient guest followed at an humble distance. When they had all partaken of refreshment, the old man thus spoke to the abbess:—

“‘Fain would I know, holy mother,’ he said, ‘what mars your repose. Make me your confidant; mayhap I can assist, or, at least, counsel you for the best.’

“ The abbess told him all ; her hopes and fears ; their dread and their danger. As she proceeded, the pale faces of the listening nuns looked like the countenances of corpses who had died of terror or affright.

“ ‘ Be comforted, my children,’ said he, addressing the fair sisterhood. ‘ Take heart, holy mother,’ he responded to the abbess. ‘ You have helped me in my need, and I shall assist you now in your tribulation. Listen.’

“ The gentle ladies gathered around him ; he, the while, standing erect in the middle of the group.

“ ‘ The God who sees all, and knows all,’ he proceeded solemnly, ‘ will not permit your innocence to be polluted.’

“ ‘ Amen ! ’ involuntarily interposed the trembling choir.

“ ‘ — Prepare ye, with all haste, thirteen coffins.’

“ The nuns looked aghast. Death has few charms for any : perhaps for recluses least of all.

“ ‘ — Place them six and six, side by side, adown the aisle of this chapel ; and let the seventh, for the abbess, be laid at the altar’s foot.’

“ The abbess involuntarily shuddered, and muttered a prayer for mercy. How strong is the instinct of life, when even to those who are dead to the world it still clings so closely.

“ ‘ — And when the foe approaches,’ continued the Ancient of Days, apparently unheeding all that passed, ‘ wreath your hair with the fairest flowers, and then lay yourselves down in them, every one as though she were dead.’

“ ‘ Lord, have mercy on us ! ’ chanted the abbess from the litany : ‘ Christ, have mercy on us ! ’

“ ‘ Lord, have mercy on us ! ’ responded the sisterhood, appalled beyond measure at these strange instructions.

“ ‘ — I will be with you in the moment of danger,’ said he, with a sweet smile. ‘ When the foe forces this sanctuary, then shall ye see me again. Bless ye all until that hour. Adieu ! ’

“ The nuns withdrew to their several dormitories ; and the old man followed the servitor-sister to his cell. Next morning the abbess sought eagerly for him, but she sought in vain ; he

had departed before the dawn without the cognizance of any one. She did not, however, neglect to follow his counsel: for although his sudden and mysterious disappearance was by no means satisfactory, he had, nevertheless, succeeded in inspiring her with such a confidence in his counsel, that she would have thought as soon of disobeying the canons of her order as of slighting his advice. The coffins were made ready, and then placed in the order prescribed by him along the side-aisles of the chapel; that of the abbess stood at the foot of the altar, as he had directed.

“Within a week from that day, the Huns were on the shores of the river by Urbar.

“It was midnight. With throbbing hearts and anxious aspect, the affrighted sisters knelt to prayer in the chapel, each beside her own narrow resting-place, when the fierce foe from the opposite shore first burst on that hitherto sacred and peaceful solitude. Wild shouts, dreadful imprecations, hideous cries, confused noises, piercing shrieks; the clashing of swords, the ringing of bucklers, the whizzing of spears, assailed the ears of the terrified virgins from all points of the island. The convent was soon surrounded. The weak walls and slight portals of the edifice afforded no effectual barrier against those reckless and infuriate savages. Onward they rushed through the halls—ransacking the cells, and filling every corner of the cloisters. The chapel alone was yet untouched. The trembling maidens within it had, however, just relinquished all hope, and given themselves up for lost, when the old man, their friend of the former night, once more appeared among them.

“‘Betake ye to your shrouds,’ said he, greeting them majestically. ‘Your heads are crowned with flowers: lay ye for the present in yon beds of death.’

“They laid them hastily down in their coffins, and folded their hands on their breasts. In a moment more they were all unconscious of existence. No human eye could look on them and believe that they were not corpses, so wan, so wo-begone, so death-like, did they seem.

“ The old man waved his hand, and two beautiful boys, lovely as angels, came forth from the sacristy of the chapel.

“ A second time the old man waved his hand, and the boys placed each coffin on a bier brought from the crypt below, where reposed the remains of a former generation of sisters. All these things were done with an inconceivable rapidity.

“ ‘ In another instant the fierce Huns had burst open the door; and, like the wild waves of a stormy sea in flood-tide, they tumbled over one another into the sacred edifice. A single glance, however, sufficed to appal even the stoutest-hearted among them; and the very foremost in the onslaught at once recoiled in affright at the sight which met his eyes.

“ Standing erect, before the tabernacle of the high altar of the chapel, was the Ancient—now old no longer—but wearing the shape and semblance of a young man of unearthly presence and celestial beauty; his brow encircled by a halo, and his whole aspect beaming the brightness of Heaven. On each side of him sat the lovely boys—now angels of grace. Over the coffins of the twelve maidens and the pious abbess, a blaze of light, such as this world never beheld, burned brilliantly and incessantly.

“ The Saviour, for He it was who stood there, a third time waved his hand. The nuns all arose. The savage invaders shrunk backwards in affright. A panic seized on these cruel marauders—they slunk off and fled far from that sanctuary humbled and howling. Few found their way to the opposite shore of the Rhine; almost all were swept away by the rapid current; not one remained alive on the island. Next morning the river, as far down as Bonn, was covered with their floating bodies; and the narrow strait between the island and the mainland was nearly choked by them for the remainder of the day. Next evening the army was leagues distant from this fatal spot, on its route to Bavaria. Never again did the Huns molest the recluses of Niederwörth.”

It is said, that when the dwellers on the shore came to inquire after the fate of the fair inhabitants of the convent, on the departure of these ravagers from the land, they found

dormitory and refectory, chapel and garden, deserted. Not a living soul was to be seen. But there were thirteen new-made graves discovered in the cemetery, and at the head of each stood a black cross, inscribed with the name of the abbess and the nuns who lay beneath. How these ladies were interred, and what time they died, remains to this day, and will, perhaps, ever remain, a complete mystery.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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